ATOMIC ROBO

THE WORLD'S GREATEST SCIENCE ADVENTURE MAGAZINE!

Fitted for the Future

Brian Clevinger / Scott Wegener
Tess Stone / Jeff Powell / Lee Black

WEST OF SANTA CATALINA ISLAND, 2023

THE *PROMETHEUS*

GEOFFREY ZEBOS FOUNDER AND CEO OF ORINOCO OCCASIONALLY THE RICHEST MAN IN HISTORY

ROBO, SO GLAD YOU COULD *JOIN* US.

N-380

HONESTLY?

*I ALMOST **DECLINED** THE INVITATION.*

WHAT CHANGED YOUR MIND?

ONE WEEK AGO...

IT'S FROM THE PIONEERS' CLUB?

BUNCHA **DEMENTED** RICH FREAKS CELEBRATING THE GOOD WORK THAT **ACCIDENTALLY** COMES OUTTA THEIR TAX DODGES.

THEY'RE GIVING YOU AN AWARD.

"LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN THE FIELD OF SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE."

A **NAKED** ATTEMPT TO BUY **MY** GOOD NAME TO ASSOCIATE IT WITH **THEIR** OUTFIT.

I TAKE IT YOU'LL BE DECLINING.

WITH **GUSTO!**

IT'S JUST AS WELL.

ACCEPTING SUCH AN AWARD COULD ONLY **ANTAGONIZE** SIR RICHARD BRANSON WHO HAS ALWAYS COVETED, YET NEVER RECEIVED, AN INVITATION.

IT'S JUST SUCH AN HONOR.

THANK YOU FOR SAYING THAT, ROBO.

THE MEDIA MAKES THE MOST RIDICULOUS ACCUSATIONS ABOUT THE PIONEERS.

YEAH, WHAT WAS IT AGAIN?

"BILLIONAIRES THROWING PENNIES OF GOODWILL TO HIDE DOLLARS OF INJUSTICE."

I DON'T RECALL.

WHERE ARE THE OTHER PIONEERS ANYWAY?

OH, I SUSPECT THEY'RE CONDUCTING LAST MINUTE BUSINESS.

YOU KNOW, BEFORE THE STORM MELODRAMATICALLY CUTS OUR CONNECTION TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

YOU DON'T SEEM TOO WORRIED.

I'M NOT.

LET ME SHOW YOU WHY.

THE *PROMETHEUS* IS MANAGED BY ORINOCO'S ***PROPRIETARY*** AUTOMATIC NEURAL NETWORK ALGORITHM, OR ***ANNA.***

Good afternoon, Mr. Zebos.

ANNA, I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE OUR NEWEST ***GUEST,*** ATOMIC ROBO.

A pleasure to meet you, Atomic Robo.

HI, ANNA.

*AN AUTOMATIC INTELLIGENCE RUNS THE **WHOLE SHIP?***

NO, ***I*** RUN THIS SHIP.

ANNA IS AN ADVANCED LANGUAGE MODEL INTEGRATED INTO ***EVERY*** SYSTEM TO CARRY OUT ***MY*** ORDERS.

*ISN'T THAT **DANGEROUS?***

*I MEAN, JUST FROM AN **OPSEC** STANDPOINT.*

*SHE'S A BOTTLENECK **AND** A VULNERABILITY.*

AND ***THAT'S*** WHY SHE COMES WITH SO MANY REDUNDANCIES.

ANNA OPERATES ACROSS A *GLOBAL* CLOUD OF SERVERS.

THEY'D HAVE TO TAKE OUT *HALF* THE INTERNET TO AFFECT HER.

AND IF *THAT* HAPPENS, THERE'S A REMOTE POOL OF STAFF SUPERVISING THE SHIP'S OPERATIONS FROM SHORE.

TELEPRESENCE [ONLINE]

AND SHOULD ALL THIRTY-TWO OF *THEM* DROP DEAD, THERE'S *STILL* THE MANUAL OVERRIDE.

I SEE.

EVEN WITHOUT THE REMOTE TEAM *OR* ANNA, A *SINGLE* CREWMAN COULD NAVIGATE THE SHIP FROM HERE.

REDUNDANCIES FOR YOUR REDUNDANCIES.

WITH BACKUPS FOR OUR BACKUPS.

ANYTHING LESS WOULDN'T BE ENOUGH.

THE *PROMETHEUS* IS THE LAUNCHPAD AND COMMAND CENTER FOR ORINOCO'S SUBORBITAL OPERATIONS AFTER ALL.

*DOES ANNA HANDLE **THOSE** TOO?*

NO, WE NEED A ***FULL CREW*** ON DECK FOR LAUNCHES.

MOSTLY FOR INSURANCE PURPOSES.

AH, I WAS HOPING TO SHOW YOU THE ***ARBORETUMS*** BEFORE DINNER.

*THE--WAIT, **PLURAL?***

BOOP-A-DOOP

BUT WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU ***PRESENTABLE.***

AND ***I'VE*** A FEW TASKS TO HANDLE BEFORE THE CEREMONY.

WE'LL TALK ***MORE*** SHOP LATER.

ANNA, WILL YOU SHOW OUR GUEST TO HIS ROOM?

Certainly, Mr. Zebos.

Just follow my screens to your quarters, Atomic Robo.

PLEASE, CALL ME ROBO.

ANNA.

ARE YOU **WATCHING** ME UNDRESS?

The privacy of our guests is important to us.

YOU DIDN'T EXACTLY **ANSWER** MY QUESTION.

Guests of the *Prometheus* are monitored in the interest of their health and safety.

THAT'S A PASSIVE VOICE WAY OF SAYING **YES.**

It would be more accurate to say I am aware of you undressing.

WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT THE PIONEERS?

The privacy of our guests is important to us.

WELL PLAYED, ANNA.

YOU REALLY CAN'T TELL ME **ANYTHING?**

The other guests are currently in the main dining hall.

I can show you the way.

THANK YOU, ANNA.

AND I WON'T EVEN ASK **HOW** YOU KNEW I WAS DRESSED.

I SAY, IS *THAT* THE WORLD FAMOUS ATOMIC ROBO?

HAHA, BUT OF COURSE IT IS! OF *COURSE* IT IS.

GUESS *THAT'S* WHY I'M WEARING HIS UNDERWEAR.

WESTON TRAVERS THE NAME.

THE VENTURE CAPITALIST?

ADVENTURE CAPITALIST, I SAY!

WOULD IT SHOCK YOU TO LEARN MY FIRM PROVIDES SEED MONEY FOR A *DOZEN* SCIENTIFIC PURSUITS?

CERTAINLY SHOCKED *ME* WHEN I FOUND OUT, *HA!*

MULTIPLE NOBEL CANDIDATES AMONG THEM, OH YES.

REALLY, WHICH ONES?

WHICH PROJECTS OR WHICH NOBELS?

SCRATCH THAT, COULDN'T TELL YOU *EITHER WAY!*

LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO *THE REST* OF THE PIONEERS.

THEY'RE *SHARKS,* OLD MAN, EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM.

I FOUND OUR ***GUEST OF HONOR!***

NOW IF ONLY SOMEONE COULD TRACK DOWN OUR ***ERRANT*** HOST, WE COULD ***BEGIN*** THE FESTIVITIES.

LOOKS LIKE ***YOU*** BEGAN WITHOUT US, WESTON.

OH, HADN'T YOU HEARD?

IT'S FIVE O'CLOCK ***SOMEWHERE,*** M'DEAR!

ROBO, THE LADY ***ELEANORE COURTENAY.***

ENCHANTÉ.

LIKEWISE, I'M SURE.

THE LADY COURTENAY ISN'T LIKE THE ***REST*** OF US.

SHE'S OLD MONEY FROM WHEN THEY CALLED IT "SERVING QUEEN AND COUNTRY" RATHER THAN "IMPERIAL ATROCITIES."

DON'T BE SO ***GHOULISH,*** WESTON.

I'VE TURNED THE COURTENAY FORTUNE TO ***IMPROVING*** THE LANDS FROM WHICH IT WAS FIRST EXTRACTED.

WE'VE MADE ***TREMENDOUS*** PROGRESS OF LATE WITH REGENERATIVE CARBON CAPTURE AGRICULTURE.

WORK FUNDED ***ENTIRELY*** BY YOUR NEWEST ***PALLADIUM MINE,*** IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN.

STAFFORD KENWORTHY OF STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS.

*STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS? THE **PMC?***

WE'RE NOT THE ***BLOODTHIRSTY*** MERCENARY FORCE YOU SEE IN THE MEDIA.

WE'RE DEDICATED TO ***SAVING LIVES*** BY CHANGING THE FACE OF CONFLICT.

EVERY ***DRONE*** WE DEPLOY REMOVES ***TEN SOLDIERS*** FROM THE FRONTLINES.

BUT HOW DID *YOU* KNOW ABOUT THE MINE?

ONE OF OUR CLIENTS HAS A *CLAIM* TO THAT LAND.

TEXXON IS YOUR CLIENT?

TO CALL THEIR CLAIM AN *ABSURDITY* IS TO GIVE IT ENTIRELY TOO MUCH CREDIT!

NEVER A DULL MOMENT, EH, OLD MAN?

PAY THEM NO MIND, ROBO.

LODOVICA DORMER. OUR VERY OWN SAWBONES!

AND PAY *WESTON* NO MIND EITHER.

HE LIKES TO JOKE THAT MY COMPANY'S BIOMIMETIC NEURAL SYSTEM QUALIFIES ME AS SOME SORT OF *BRAIN SURGEON.*

DORMER BIOMETRICS! YOU'RE WORKING ON HIGH-FIDELITY, LOW-COST PROSTHETICS.

QUITE RIGHT.

AS I RECALL IT **DOESN'T** WORK.

AH, YES, WELL.

THE **SCIENCE** IS SOUND, IT'S ONLY THE **ENGINEERING** THAT'S DIFFICULT.

OUR **NEW** PROCESSOR ARCHITECTURE **SHOULD** BETTER INTEGRATE SENSORY FEEDBACK.

MY INVESTORS EXPECT **GREAT** THINGS.

WE **CERTAINLY** DO.

WAIT.

YOU FUND DOCTOR DORMER'S WORK?

OH, *EVERY* PIONEER HAS A FINANCIAL STAKE IN THE OTHERS.

THERE ARE ONLY *SO* MANY PLACES TO *PUT* MONEY AT THIS LEVEL AFTER ALL.

AND WHEN ONE CONSIDERS THE MERGERS, THE STOCK SWAPS, THE HOSTILE TAKEOVERS?

WHY, WE *COULDN'T* UNTANGLE OUR FINANCES EVEN IF WE *WANTED* TO.

IT'S *ALL* CONNECTED.

LIKE A *SPIDER'S WEB.*

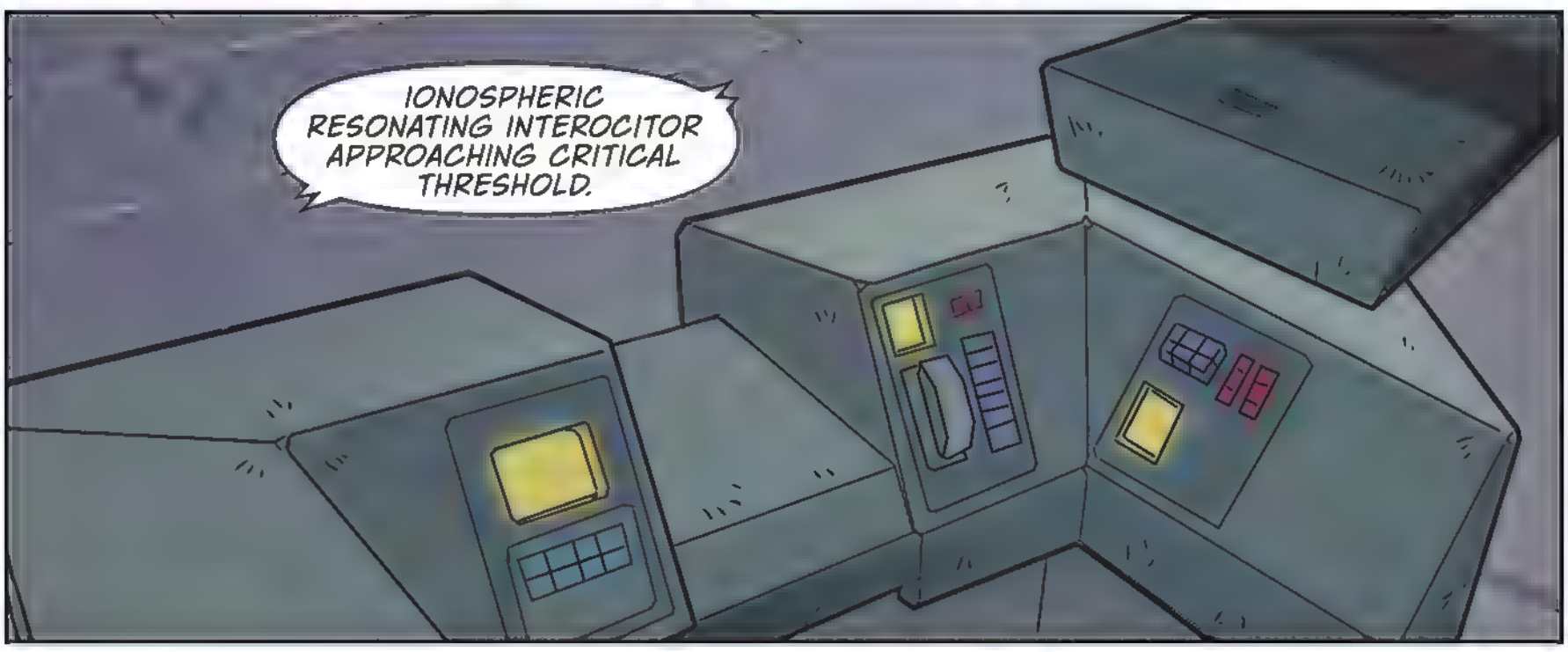
SHALL WE GET THE CEREMONY UNDERWAY?

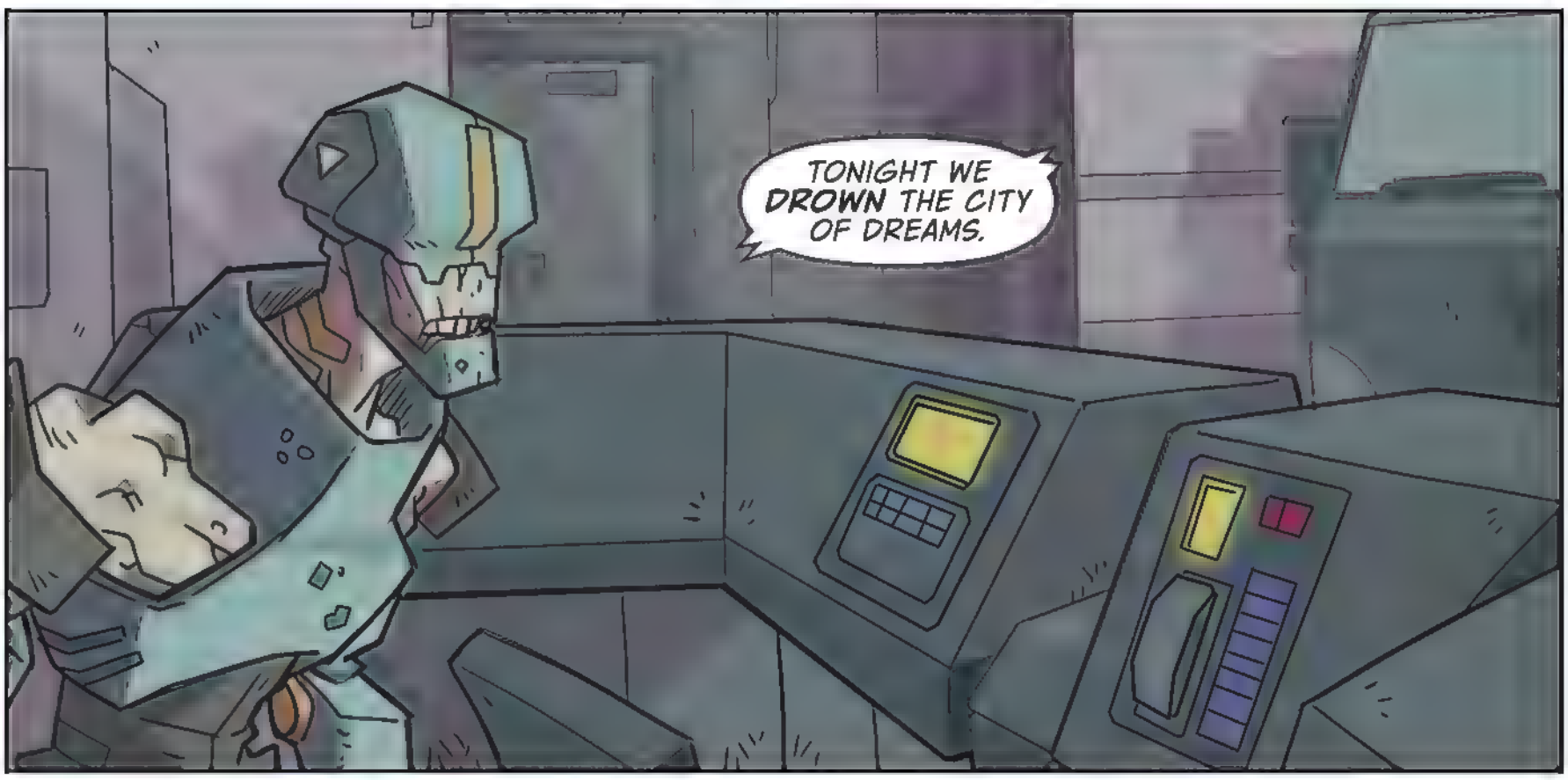
IF YOU CAN PARDON MY *INEXCUSABLE* TARDINESS, THAT IS.

THIS *ISN'T* OVER, KENWORTHY.

?

INTREPID
PLAZA


IONOSPHERIC RESONATING INTEROCITOR APPROACHING CRITICAL THRESHOLD.


TONIGHT WE **DROWN** THE CITY OF DREAMS.

MY ELECTROMAGNETIC INFUSION WILL *AMPLIFY* THE STORM INTO A CATEGORY FIVE HURRICANE BY NIGHTFALL.

WIPING THIS *BLIGHTED* CITY FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH.

MILLIONS DEAD.

A *TRILLION* DOLLARS IN DAMAGES.

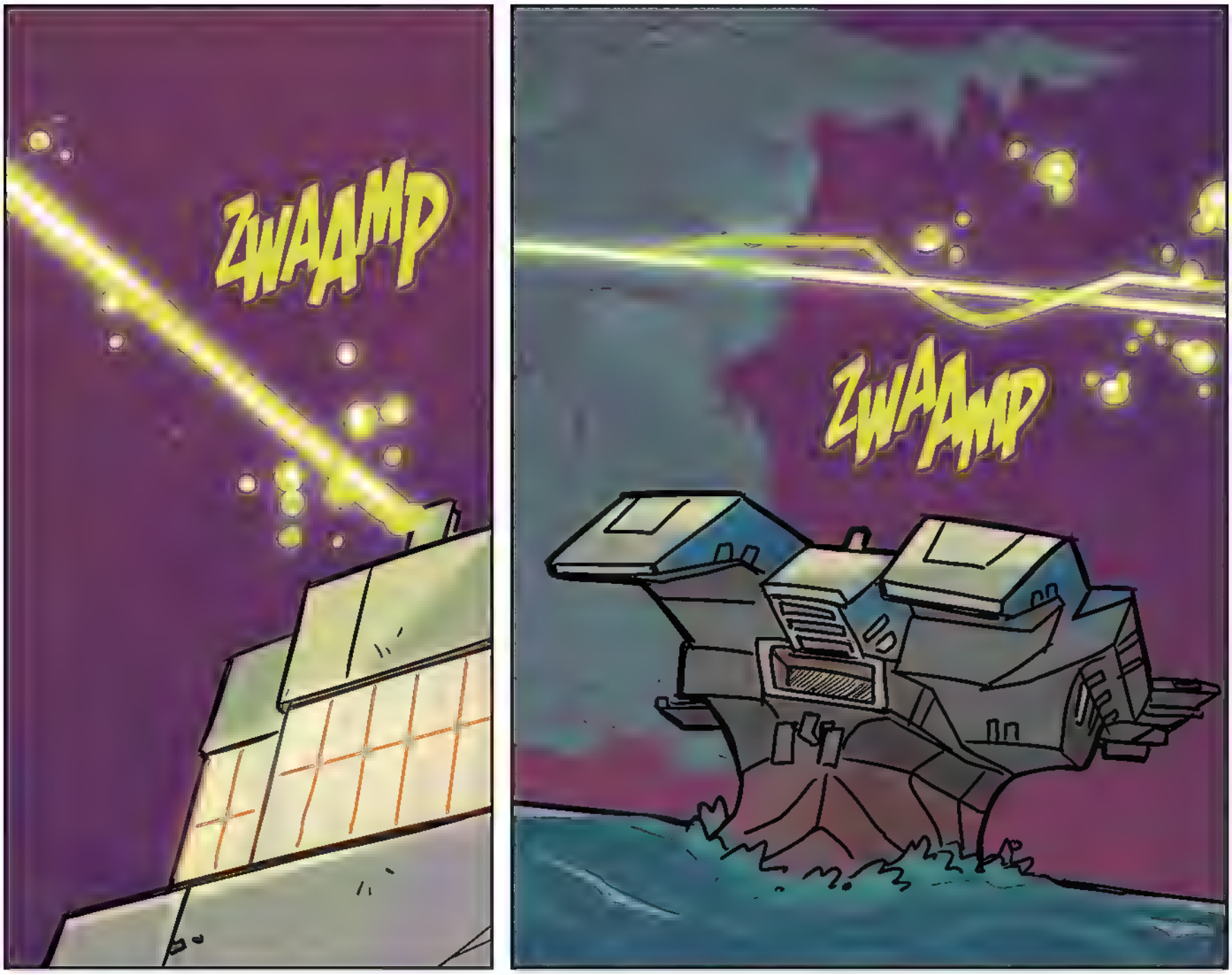
ENOUGH TO *SHATTER* THE UNITED STATES ECONOMY AND WITH IT *ALL* OF GLOBAL FINANCE.

WHAT HOPE HAVE THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD IF A MERE *DEMONSTRATION* OF MY POWER CAN TOPPLE THE *MIGHTIEST* EMPIRE AMONG THEM?

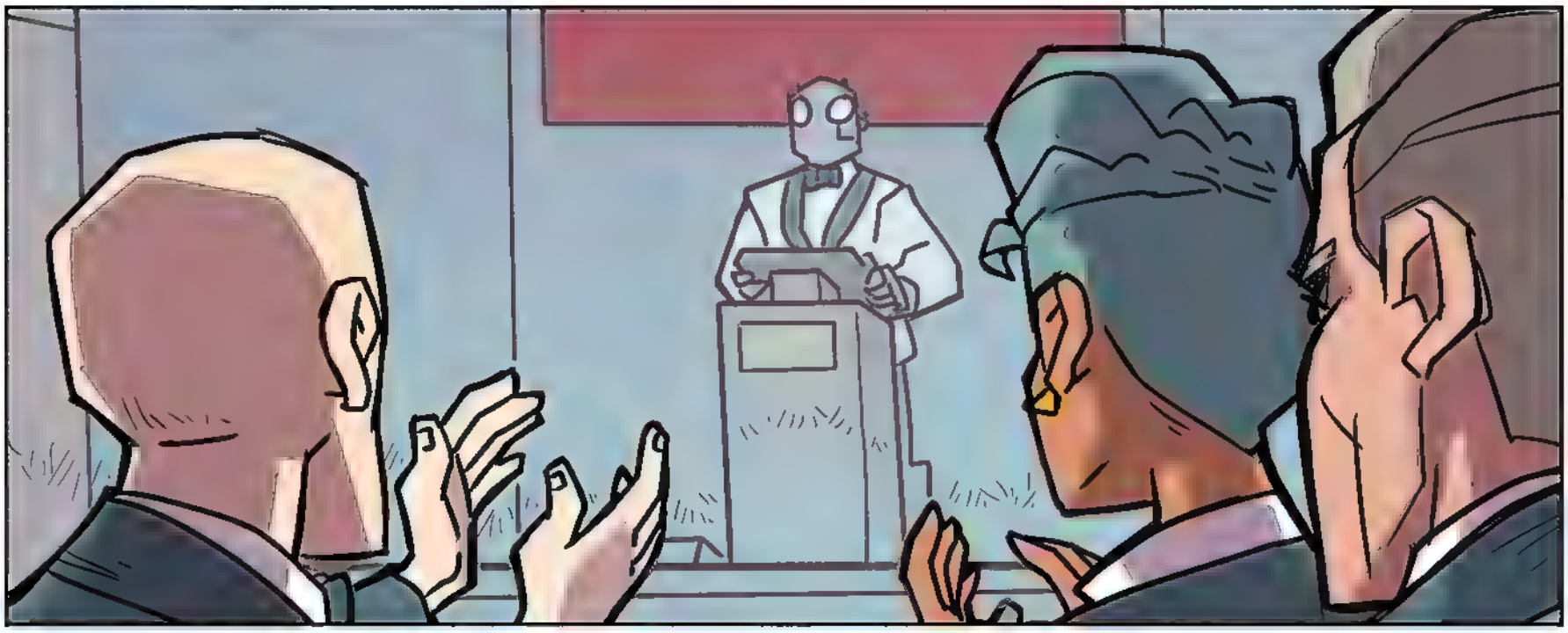
THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER WILL *CAPITULATE* OR BE *DESTROYED.*

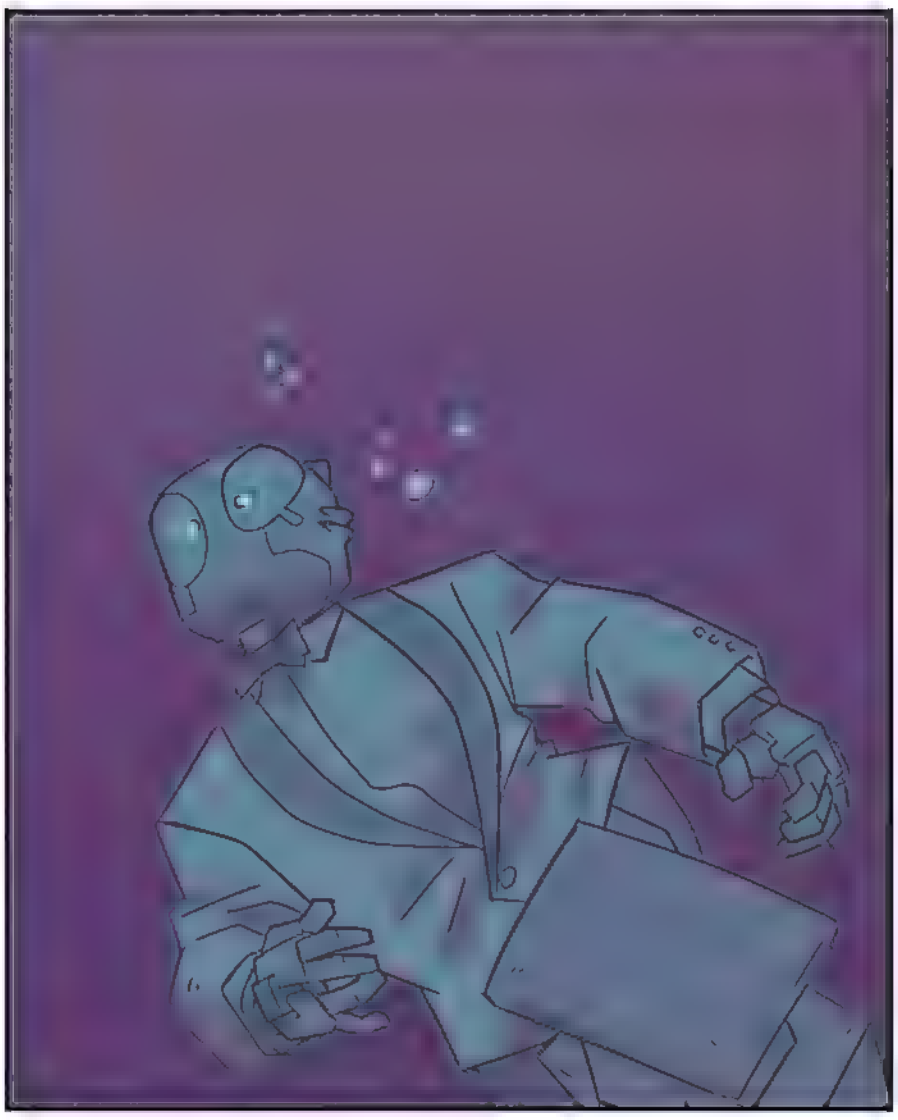
THE WORLD SHALL *ONCE AGAIN* TREMBLE BEFORE THE MIGHT OF HELSINGARD!

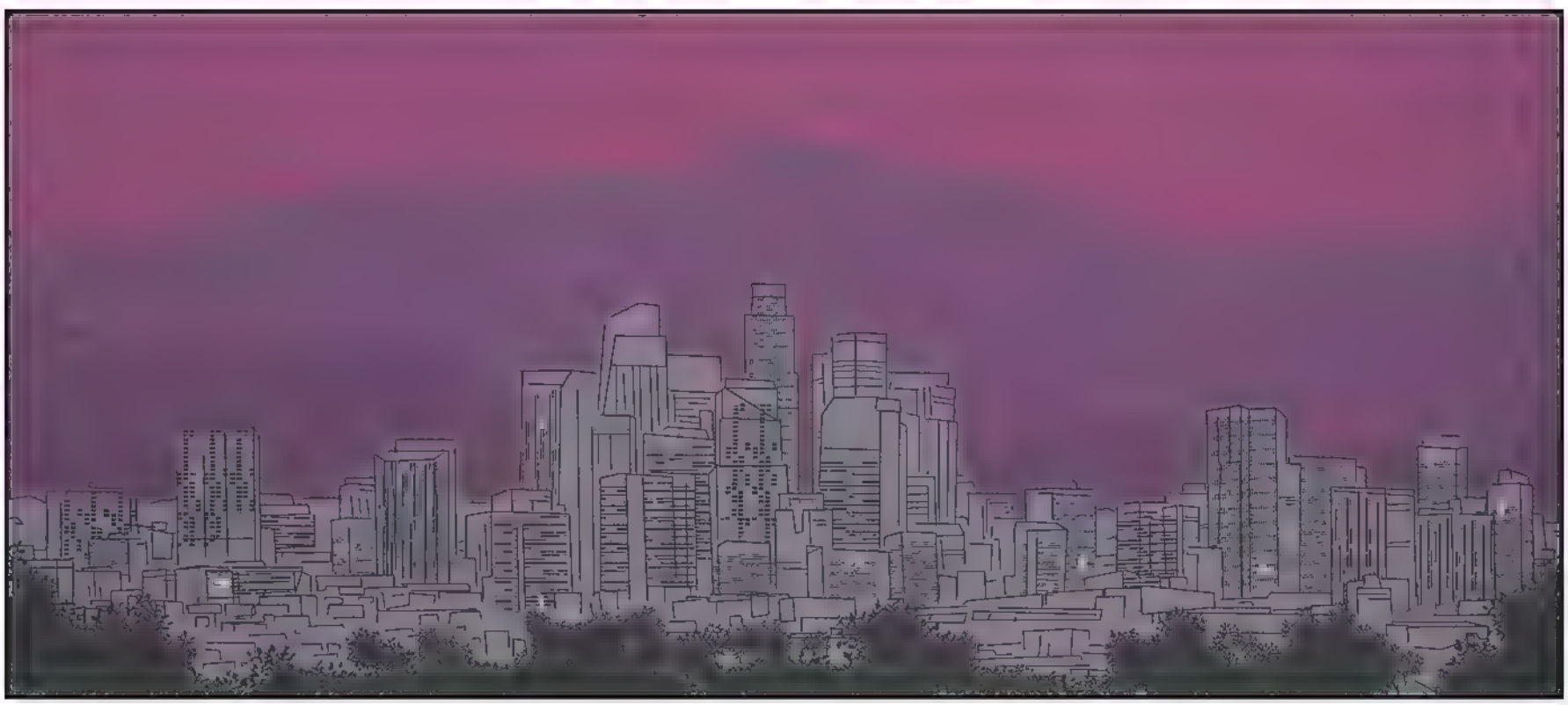
KSHUNK

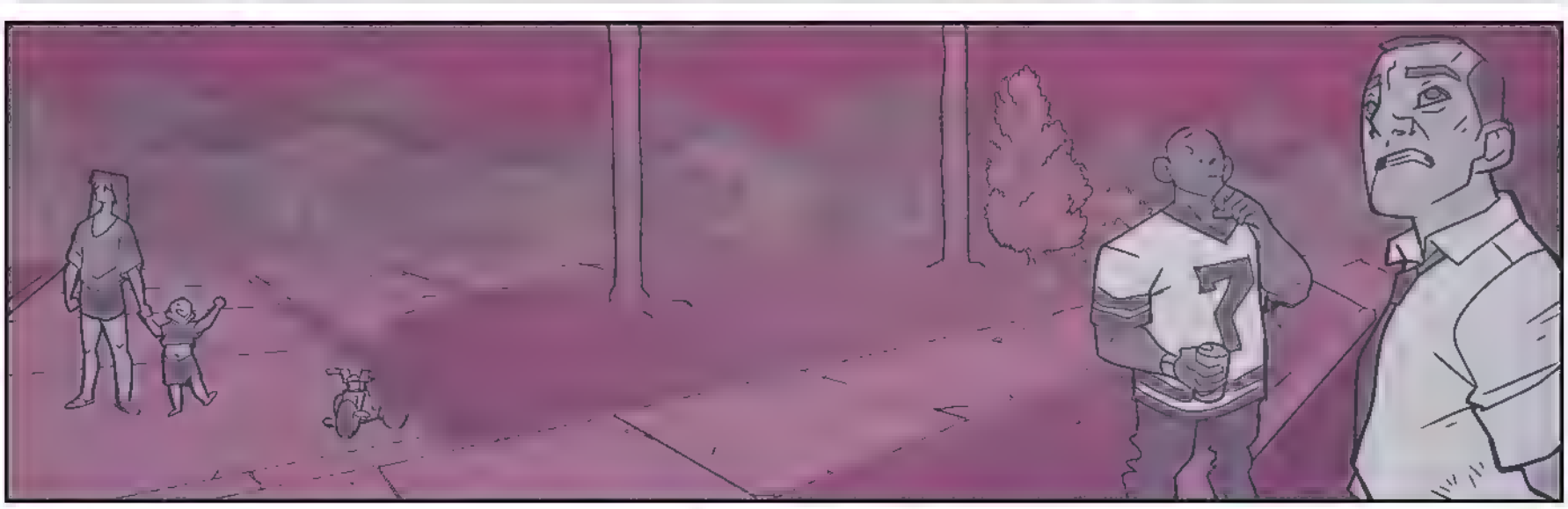

ZWAAMP
ZWAAMP

ZAKKA
TOOOOOM









CURIOUS.

THE ELECTRO-MAGNETIC PULSE WAS SEVEN PERCENT ***WEAKER*** THAN ANTICIPATED.

STILL ENOUGH TO PLUNGE THE CITY INTO ***TOTAL CHAOS.***

EVEN SO, OUGHT TO WORK OUT THE ERROR FOR ***FUTURE*** ATTACKS.

IT'S THE ***PRINCIPLE*** OF THE THING.

?

TUNK

HE'S *ALIVE!*

I *SAY,* GIVE HIM AIR.

HE QUITE *LITERALLY* DOES NOT *NEED* AIR!

W'HAPP'N

LIGHTNING, MAYBE? WE'RE NOT SURE.

ANNA'S OFFLINE AND *STILL* NO WORD FROM THE REMOTE TEAM!

MY COMS ARE DOWN.

EVERYTHING IS. RADIOS, WI-FI, CELL.

HE WHOLE *BLASTED* SHIP TOO. HALF THE DOORS ARE *LOCKED.*

AT LEAST WE'VE GOT EMERGENCY POWER?

CAME ON ABOUT *AN HOUR* AGO.

AN HOUR-- HOW LONG WAS I OUT?!

HARD TO SAY. TWO HOURS? THREE?

THREE HOURS?!

AND **NOTHING** FROM YOUR REMOTE TEAM IN ALL THAT TIME?

EVEN **WITH** THE AUXILIARY POWER?

EVERYTHING ELECTRICAL THAT WAS POWERED UP ***OR*** PLUGGED IN IS DEAD.

THAT'S **NOT** LIGHTNING, THAT'S AN ***EMP.***

STAFFORD SAID AS MUCH.

WHERE **IS** STAFFORD?

WE WERE ***SUPPOSED*** TO COME BACK IF WE'D FOUND ANYTHING.

COME ***BACK*** FROM WHAT?

WE SPLIT UP TO SEARCH FOR ***ANYTHING*** WORKING.

THEY DID, ANYWAY.

I STAYED BEHIND.

NONE OF US MADE IT *FAR*, I DON'T THINK.

STUMBLING AROUND IN THE DARK AND MOST DOORS WERE *SEALED SHUT* ANYWAY.

I'D HAVE NEVER FOUND MY WAY BACK WERE IT NOT FOR THE EMERGENCY LIGHTS.

CERTAIN I WAS WALKING IN *CIRCLES* THE WHOLE TIME.

SO, WHERE'S STAFFORD?

MAYBE HE HAD BETTER LUCK.

STAFFORD KENWORTHY
CEO OF STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS PMC
DEAD

TO BE CONTINUED...

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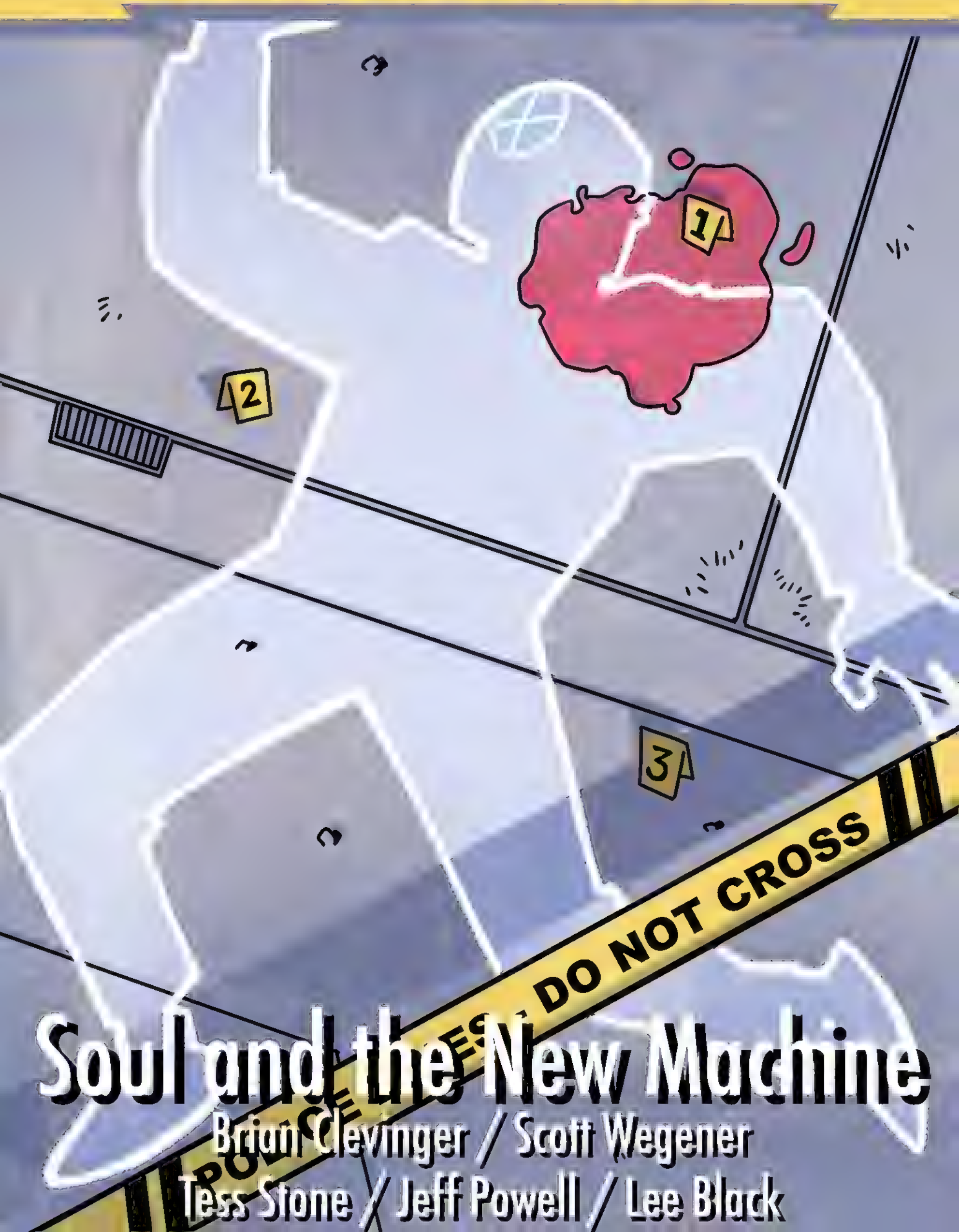

Soul and the New Machine

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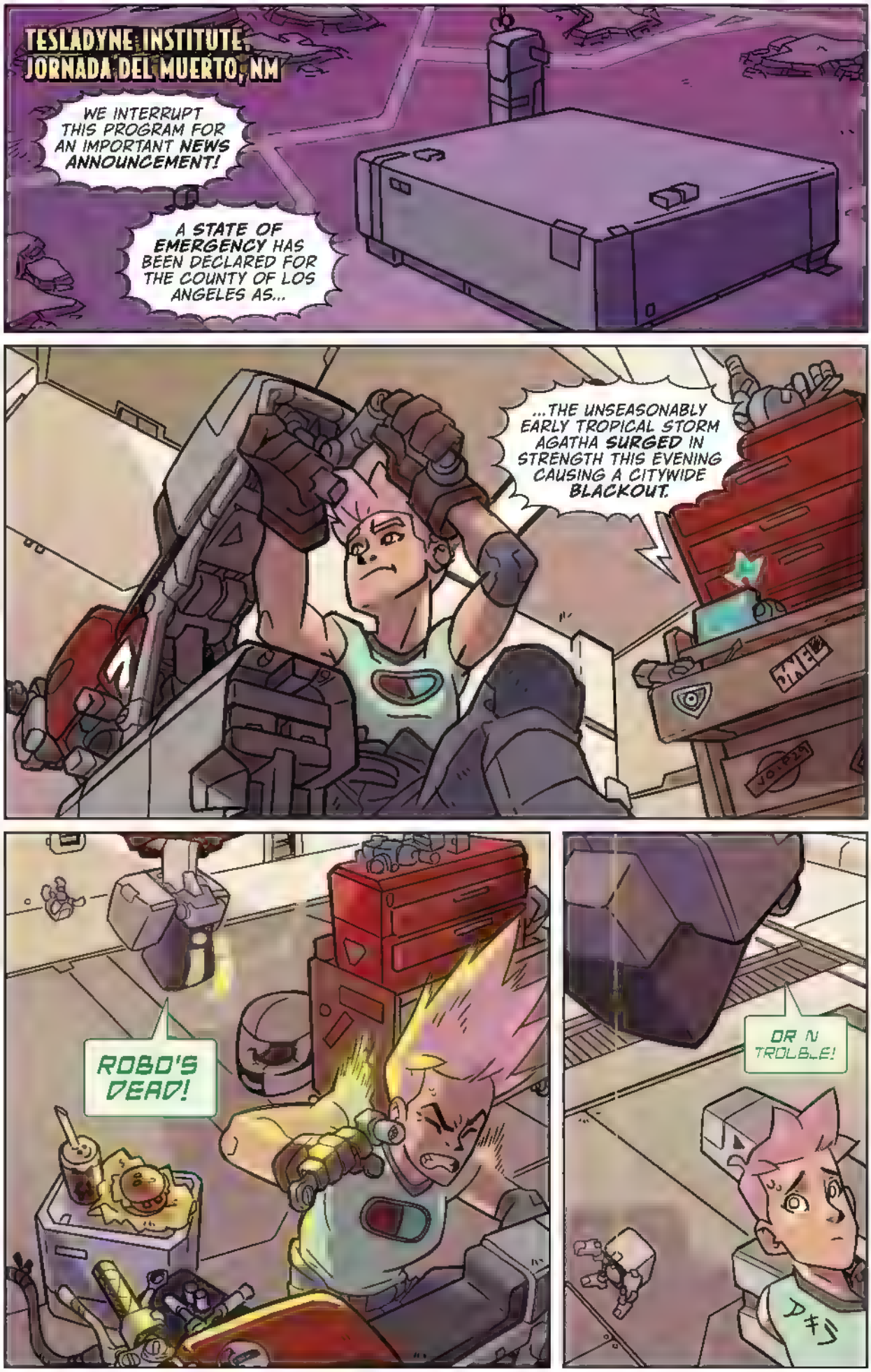
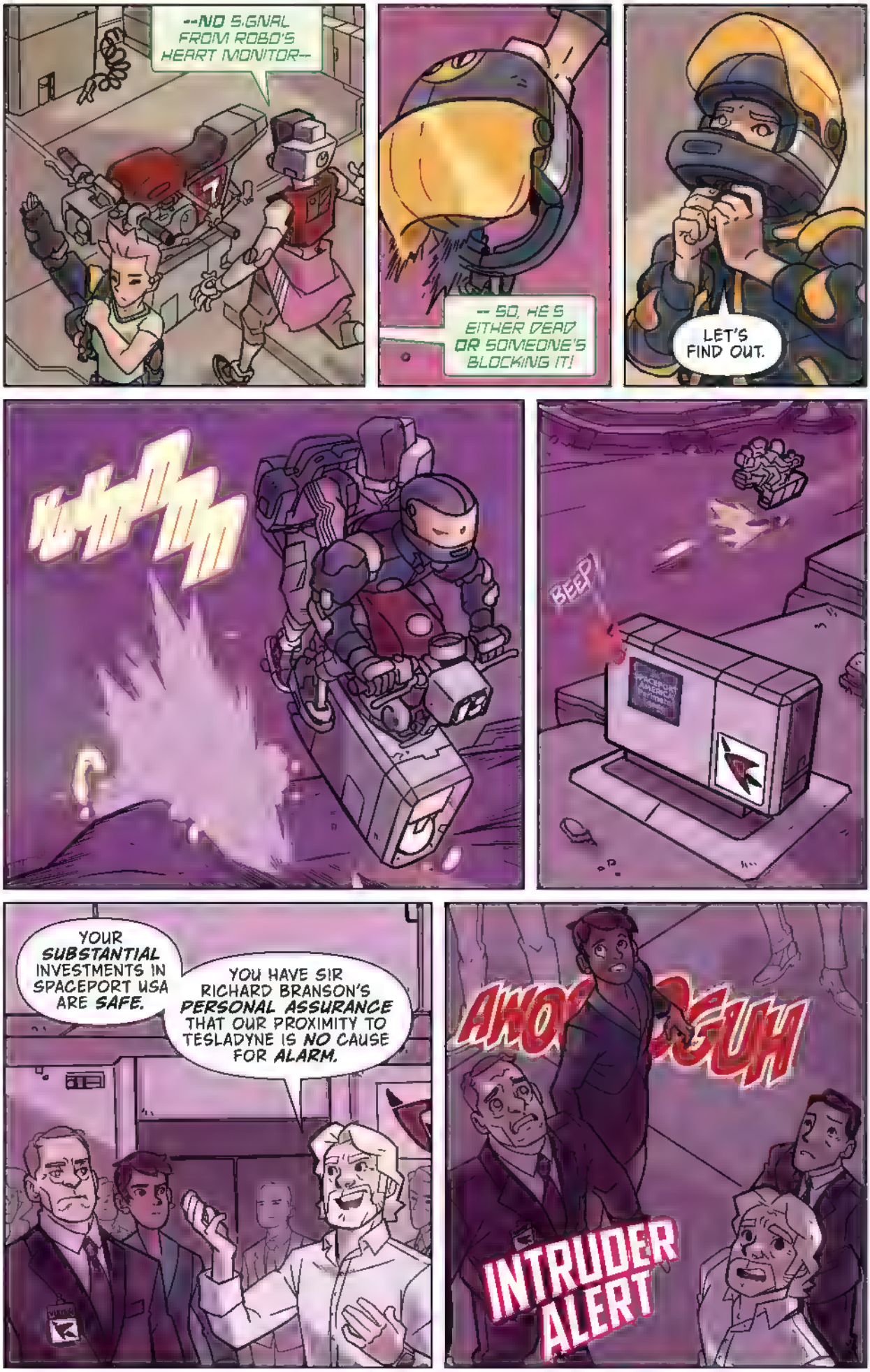
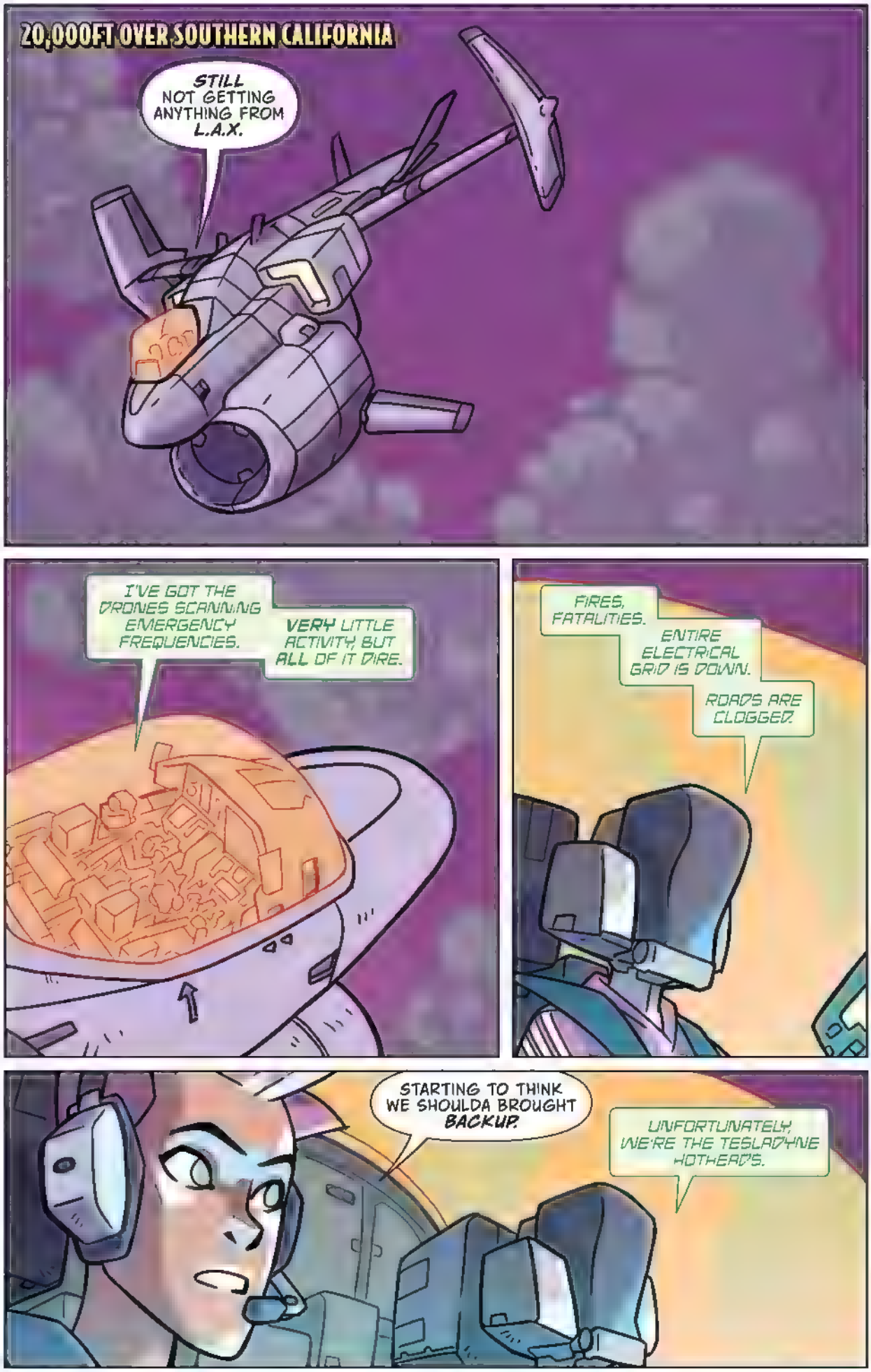
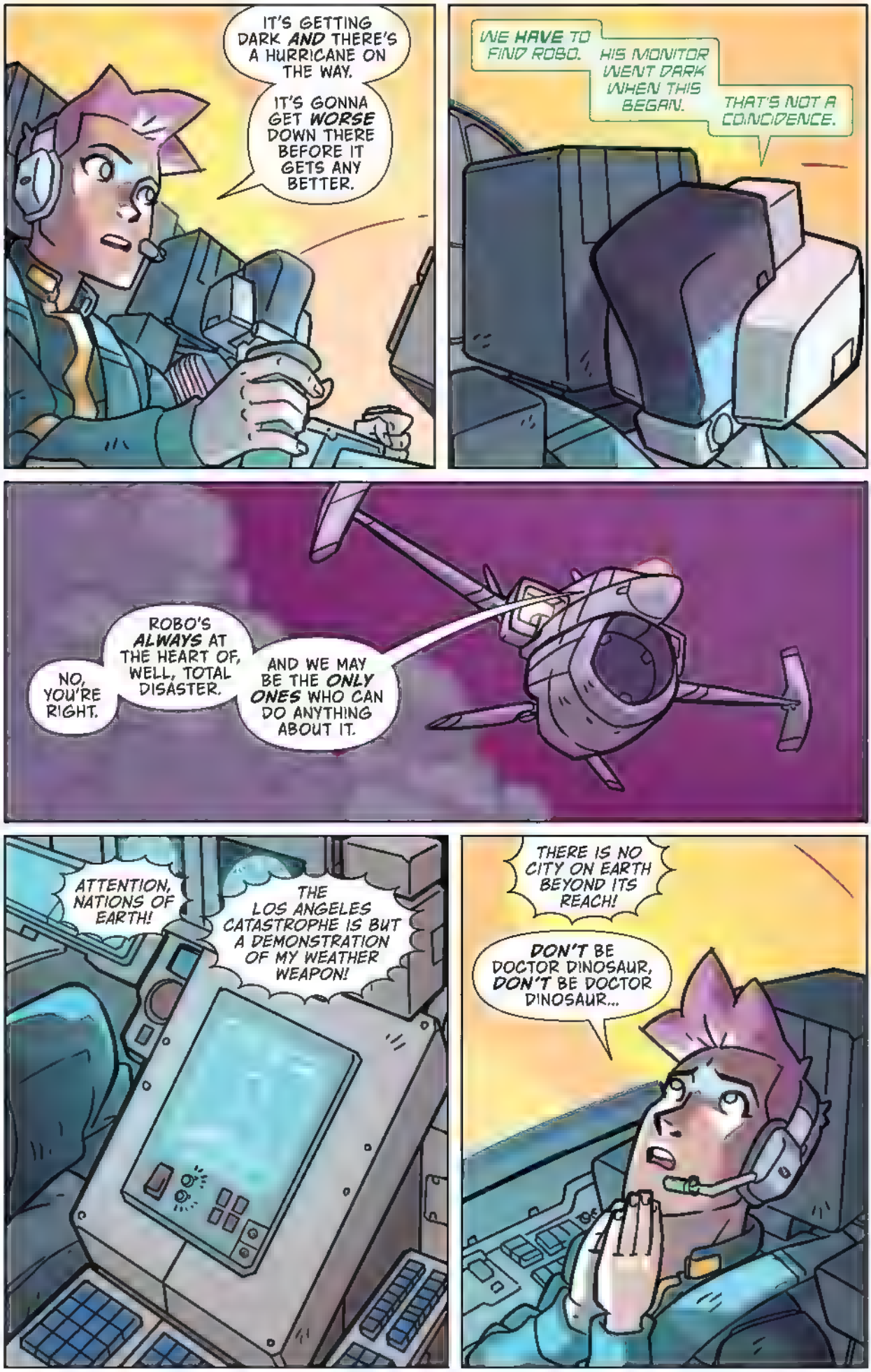

TESLADYNE INSTITUTE
JORNADA DEL MUERTO, NM
WE INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAM FOR AN IMPORTANT NEWS ANNOUNCEMENT!
A STATE OF EMERGENCY HAS BEEN DECLARED FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES AS...
...THE UNSEASONABLY EARLY TROPICAL STORM AGATHA SURGED IN STRENGTH THIS EVENING CAUSING A CITYWIDE BLACKOUT.
ROBO'S DEAD!
OR N TROUBLE!

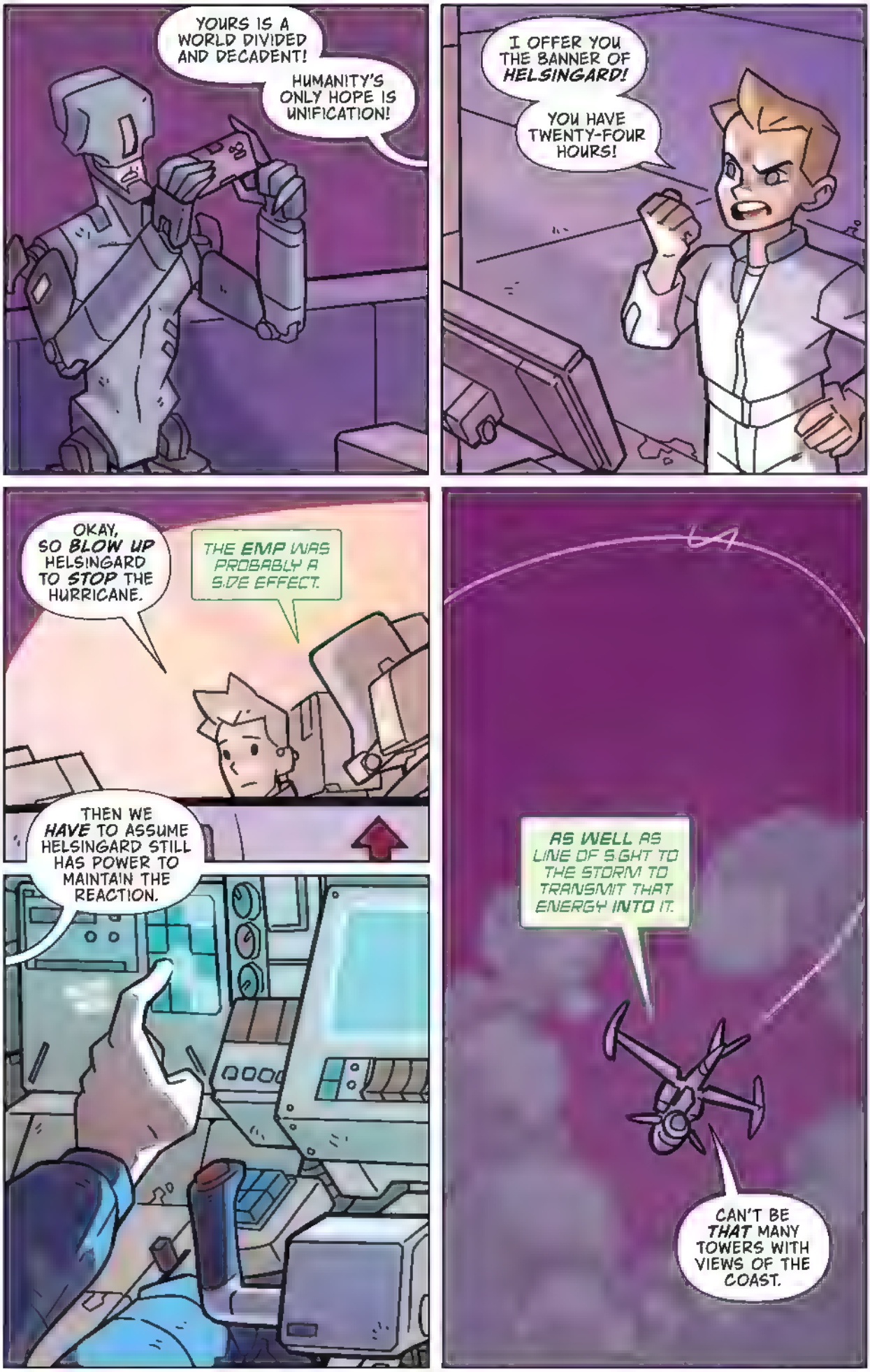

--NO SIGNAL FROM ROBO'S HEART MONITOR--
-- SO, HE'S EITHER DEAD OR SOMEONE'S BLOCKING IT!
LET'S FIND OUT.
BEEP!
YOUR SUBSTANTIAL INVESTMENTS IN SPACEPORT USA ARE SAFE.
YOU HAVE SIR RICHARD BRANSON'S PERSONAL ASSURANCE THAT OUR PROXIMITY TO TESLADYNE IS NO CAUSE FOR ALARM.
INTRUDER ALERT

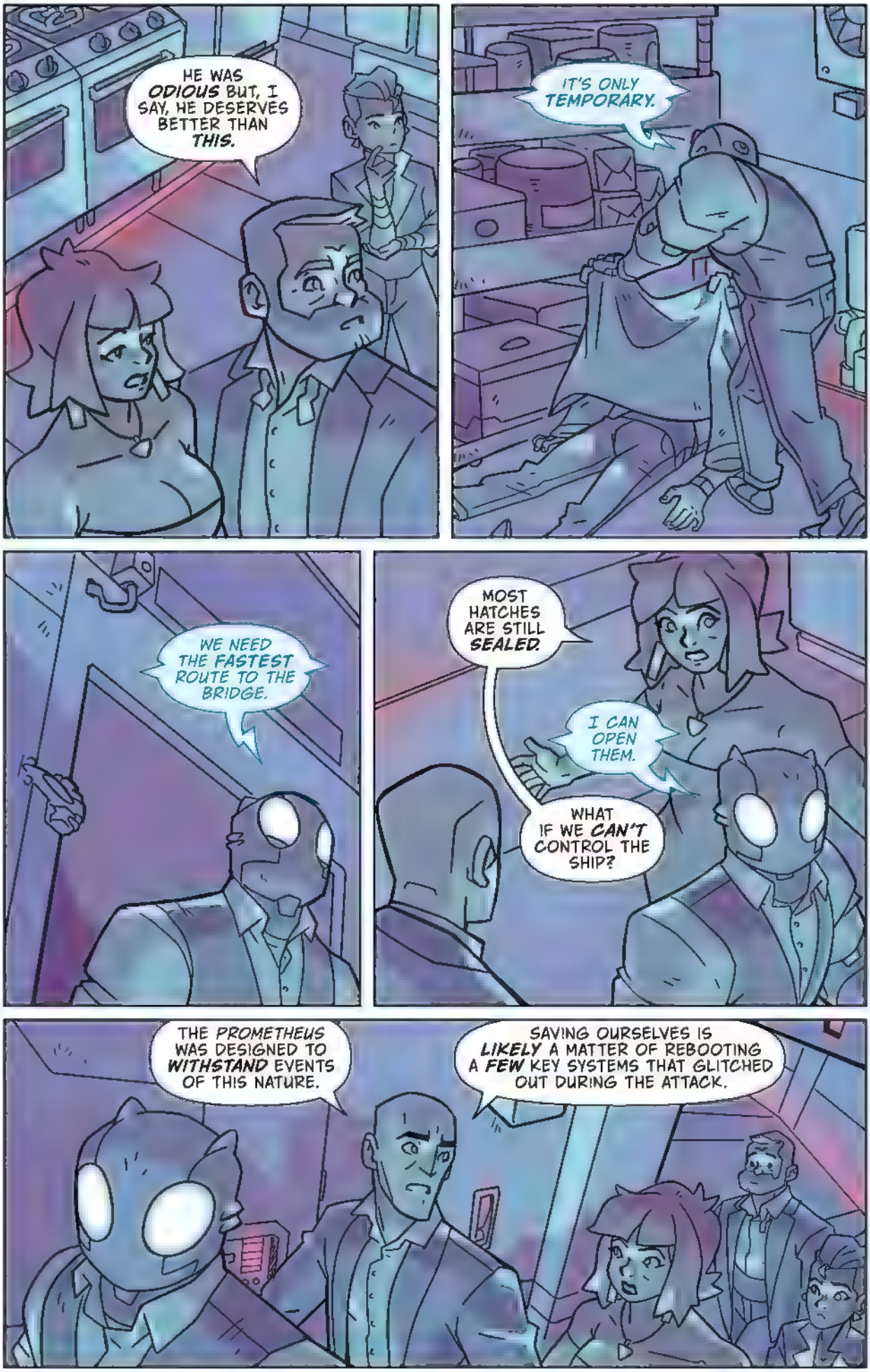
AHOOOGUH
INTRUDER ALERT
DAMN YOU, TESLADYNE!
HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN?
WELL, I'D SAY GRAVITY DID MOST OF THE WORK.
LIKELY PUSHED.
MEANWHILE, ABOARD THE PROMETHEUS...
STEADY ON, ROBO.
MY GOD, ROBO, WE KNEW STAFFORD!
STRANGERS RARELY HAVE CAUSE TO KILL ONE ANOTHER.

THIS IS RIDICULOUS.
WE'RE ADRIFT AND THE SEAS ARE CHURNING.
IT DOESN'T TAKE A CONSPIRACY TO SLIP AND FALL UNDER THESE CONDITIONS.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
UNTIL WE REGAIN CONTROL OF THE SHIP, YOU'RE ALL IN DANGER.
WE'LL HEAD FOR THE BRIDGE.
TOGETHER.
TO AVOID ANOTHER "ACCIDENT."
I'M NOT SURE I CARE FOR YOUR TONE.
WE'RE NOT LEAVING HIM HERE, EH?
I'VE A SUGGESTION.
THOUGH I'M AFRAID IT'S A BIT GHOULISH.


20,000FT OVER SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
STILL NOT GETTING ANYTHING FROM L.A.X.
I'VE GOT THE DRONES SCANNING EMERGENCY FREQUENCIES.
VERY LITTLE ACTIVITY, BUT ALL OF IT DIRE.
FIRES, FATALITIES.
ENTIRE ELECTRICAL GRID IS DOWN.
ROADS ARE CLOGGED.
STARTING TO THINK WE SHOULDA BROUGHT BACKUP.
UNFORTUNATELY, WE'RE THE TESLADYNE HOTHEAD'S.


IT'S GETTING DARK AND THERE'S A HURRICANE ON THE WAY.
IT'S GONNA GET WORSE DOWN THERE BEFORE IT GETS ANY BETTER.
WE HAVE TO FIND ROBO.
HIS MONITOR WENT DARK WHEN THIS BEGAN.
THAT'S NOT A COINCIDENCE.
NO, YOU'RE RIGHT.
ROBO'S ALWAYS AT THE HEART OF, WELL, TOTAL DISASTER.
AND WE MAY BE THE ONLY ONES WHO CAN DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT.
ATTENTION, NATIONS OF EARTH!
THE LOS ANGELES CATASTROPHE IS BUT A DEMONSTRATION OF MY WEATHER WEAPON!
THERE IS NO CITY ON EARTH BEYOND ITS REACH!
DON'T BE DOCTOR DINOSAUR, DON'T BE DOCTOR DINOSAUR...


YOURS IS A WORLD DIVIDED AND DECADENT!
HUMANITY'S ONLY HOPE IS UNIFICATION!
I OFFER YOU THE BANNER OF HELSINGARD!
YOU HAVE TWENTY-FOUR HOURS!
OKAY, SO BLOW UP HELSINGARD TO STOP THE HURRICANE.
THE EMP WAS PROBABLY A SIDE EFFECT.
THEN WE HAVE TO ASSUME HELSINGARD STILL HAS POWER TO MAINTAIN THE REACTION.
AS WELL AS LINE OF SIGHT TO THE STORM TO TRANSMIT THAT ENERGY INTO IT.
CAN'T BE THAT MANY TOWERS WITH VIEWS OF THE COAST.

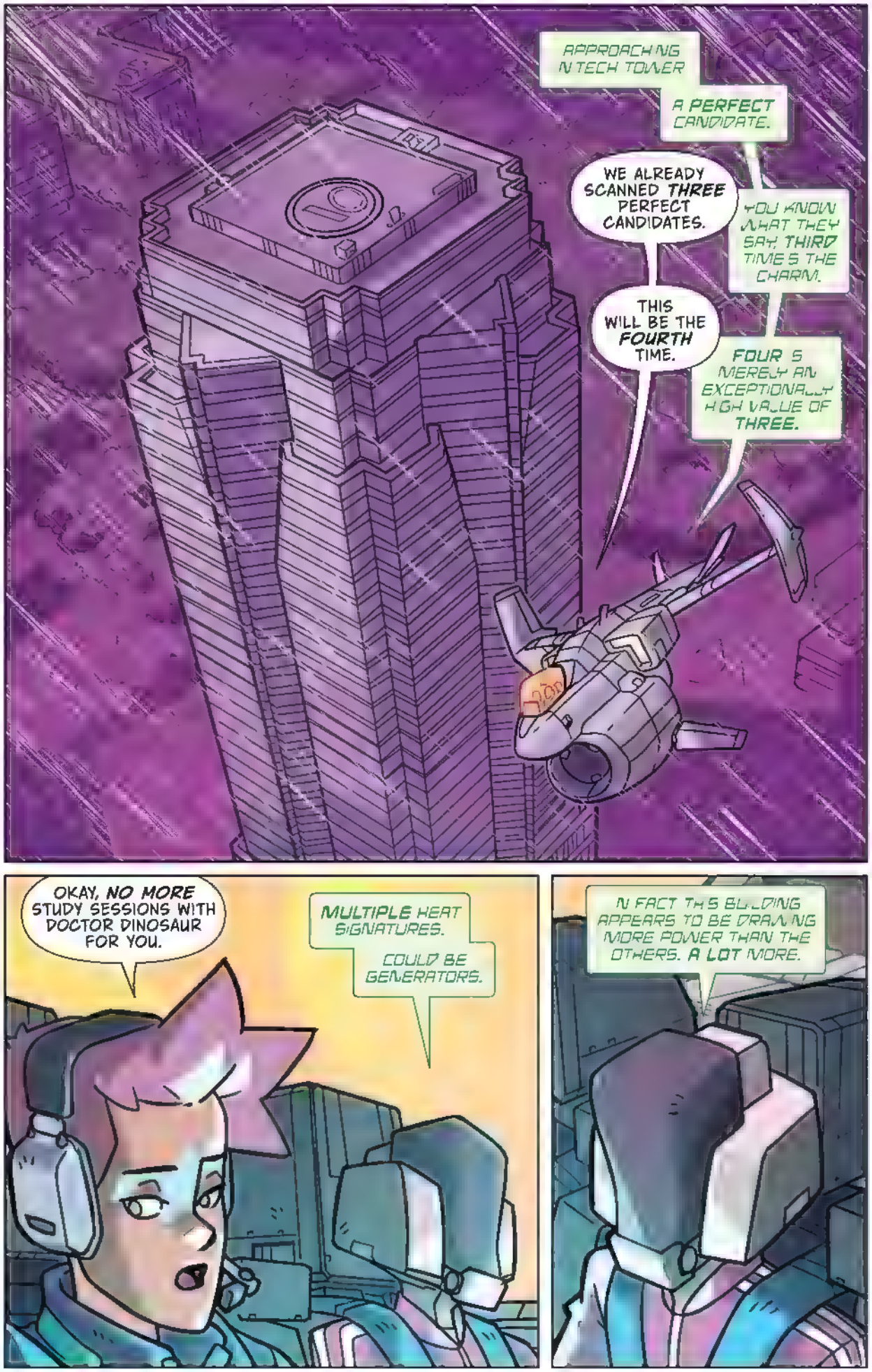

HE WAS ODIOUS BUT, I SAY, HE DESERVES BETTER THAN THIS.
IT'S ONLY TEMPORARY.
WE NEED THE FASTEST ROUTE TO THE BRIDGE.
MOST HATCHES ARE STILL SEALED.
I CAN OPEN THEM.
WHAT IF WE CAN'T CONTROL THE SHIP?
THE PROMETHEUS WAS DESIGNED TO WITHSTAND EVENTS OF THIS NATURE.
SAVING OURSELVES IS LIKELY A MATTER OF REBOOTING A FEW KEY SYSTEMS THAT GLITCHED OUT DURING THE ATTACK.

KRRRAAAAAAAAABBBBL

AT THE VERY *LEAST* WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO GET WORD OUT THAT WE NEED ASSISTANCE.
THAT SHOULD BE OUR FIRST PRIORITY.
WE CAN WORK OUT HOW TO REBOOT THE SHIP'S NAVIGATION WHILE HELP IS ON HE WAY.

I SAY, IS IT *MUCH* FURTHER TO THE BRIDGE?
THAT STORM IS GETTING *WORSE* BY THE MINUTE.
KRAKBO
THERE'S *NOTHING* TO WORRY ABOUT.
EVEN ADRIFT *THE PROMETHEUS* CAN *EASILY* WITHSTAND UP TO *CATEGORY ONE* HURRICANES.

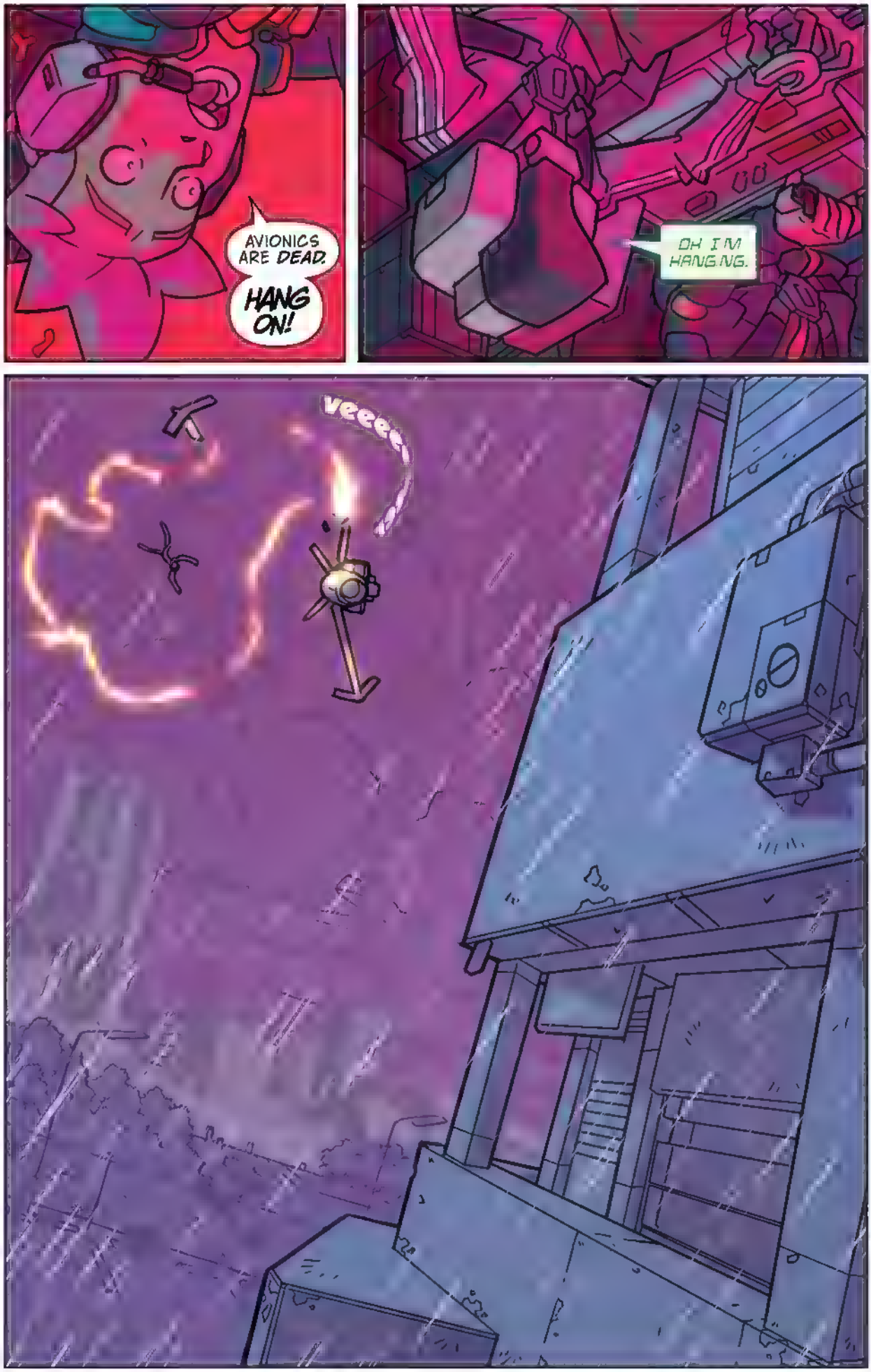
HURRICANE AGATHA
CATEGORY TWO
FTOOOSH!
TOOM
AAAAAHHH!
creeeeeaaaaak
THINK IT'S SAFE TO SAY THIS STORM IS GETTING BIGGER.

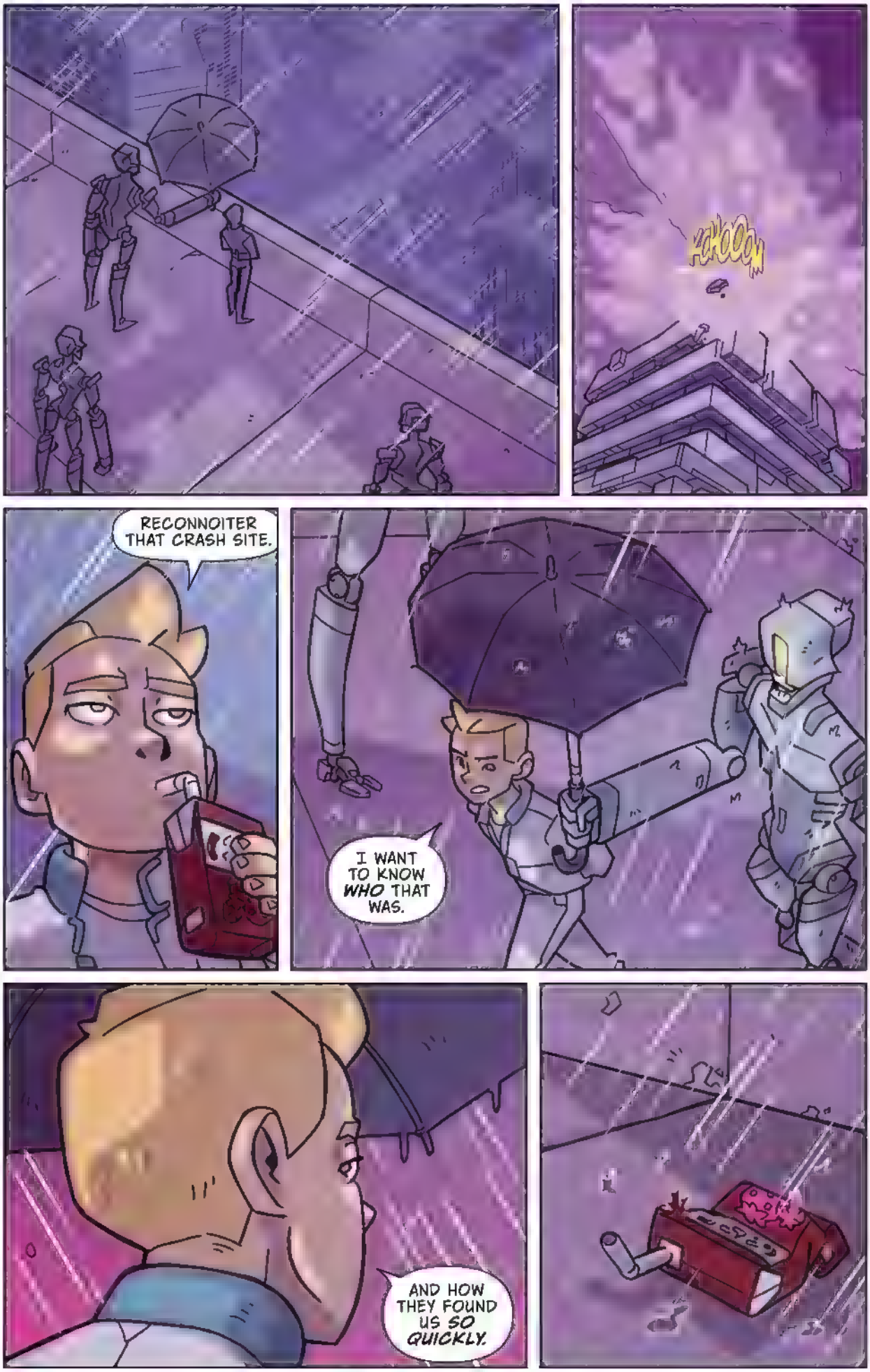

APPROACHING N TECH TOWER
A PERFECT CANDIDATE.
WE ALREADY SCANNED THREE PERFECT CANDIDATES.
YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY, THIRD TIME'S THE CHARM.
THIS WILL BE THE FOURTH TIME.
FOUR IS MERELY AN EXCEPTIONALLY HIGH VALUE OF THREE.
OKAY, NO MORE STUDY SESSIONS WITH DOCTOR DINOSAUR FOR YOU.
MULTIPLE HEAT SIGNATURES.
COULD BE GENERATORS.
IN FACT THIS BUILDING APPEARS TO BE DRAWING MORE POWER THAN THE OTHERS. A LOT MORE.

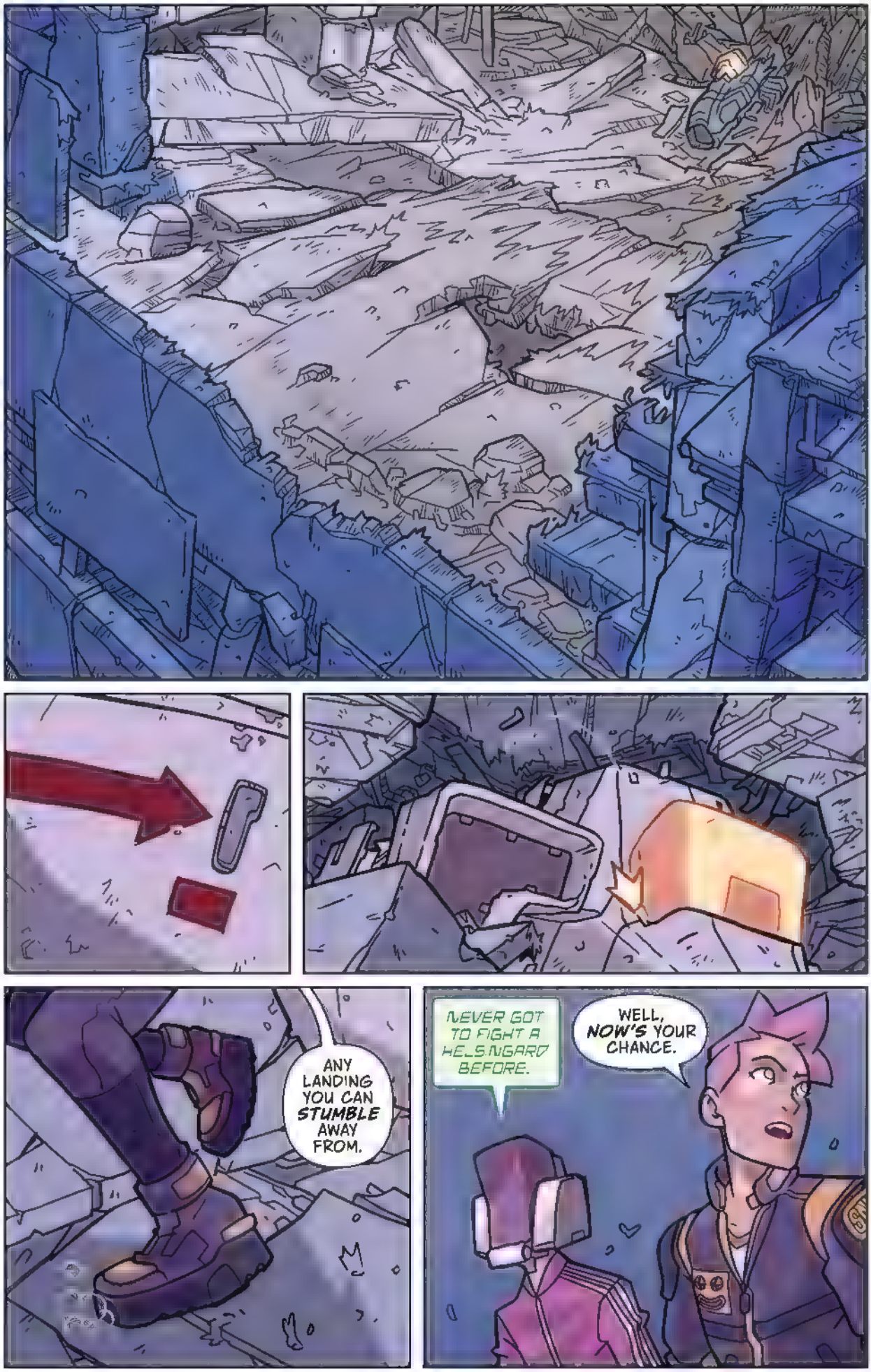
EEP EEP EEP
MISSILE LOCK?!
CURIOUS.
IT OUGHT TO HAVE TAKEN THE AUTHORITIES AT LEAST ANOTHER FIVE HOURS TO MOUNT A RESPONSE.
TSK, SUCH A NUISANCE.
CAN'T SHAKE IT!

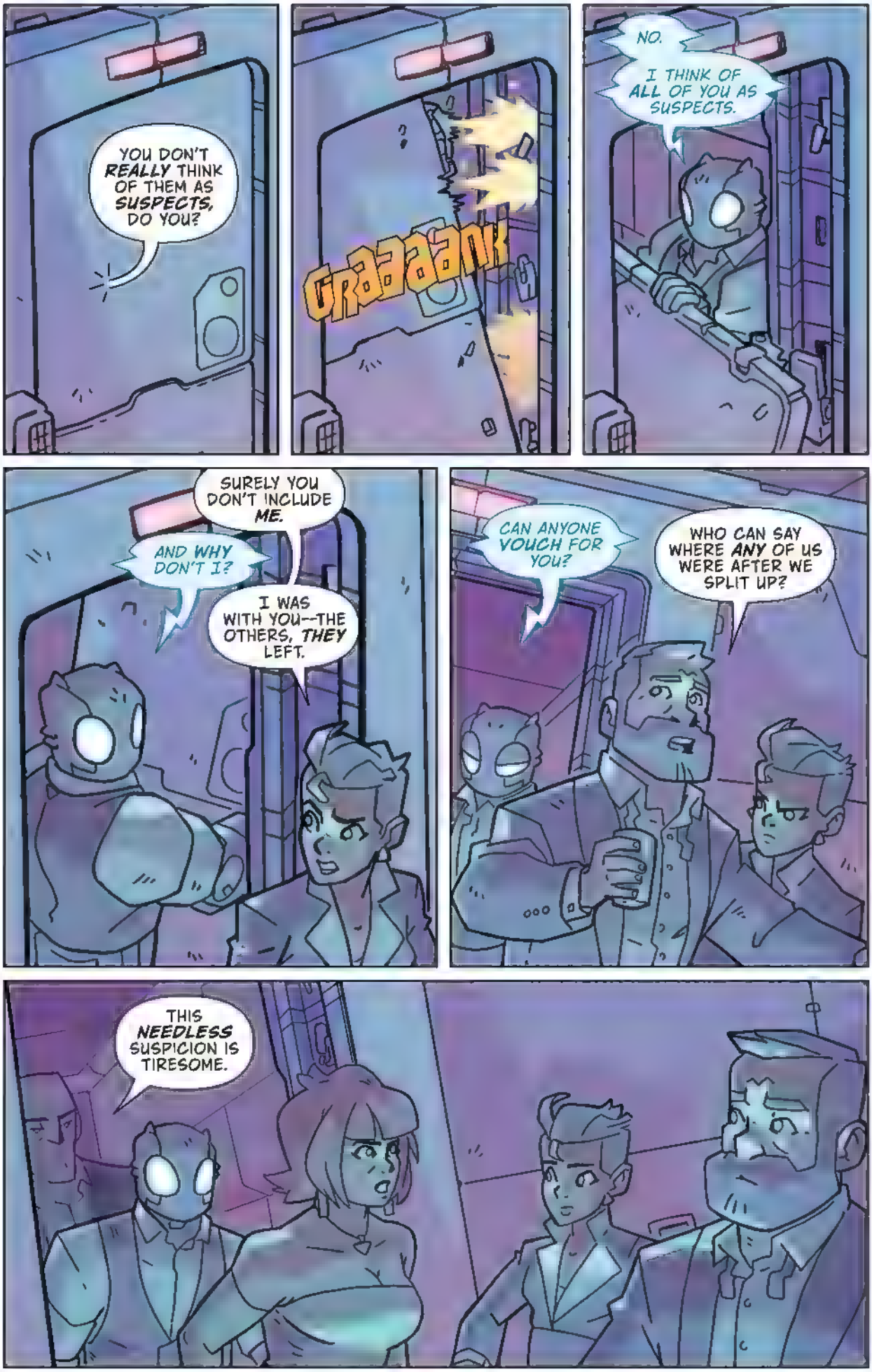
SHROOOOSH
BRACE FOR IMPACT!
KTONG
AAAA

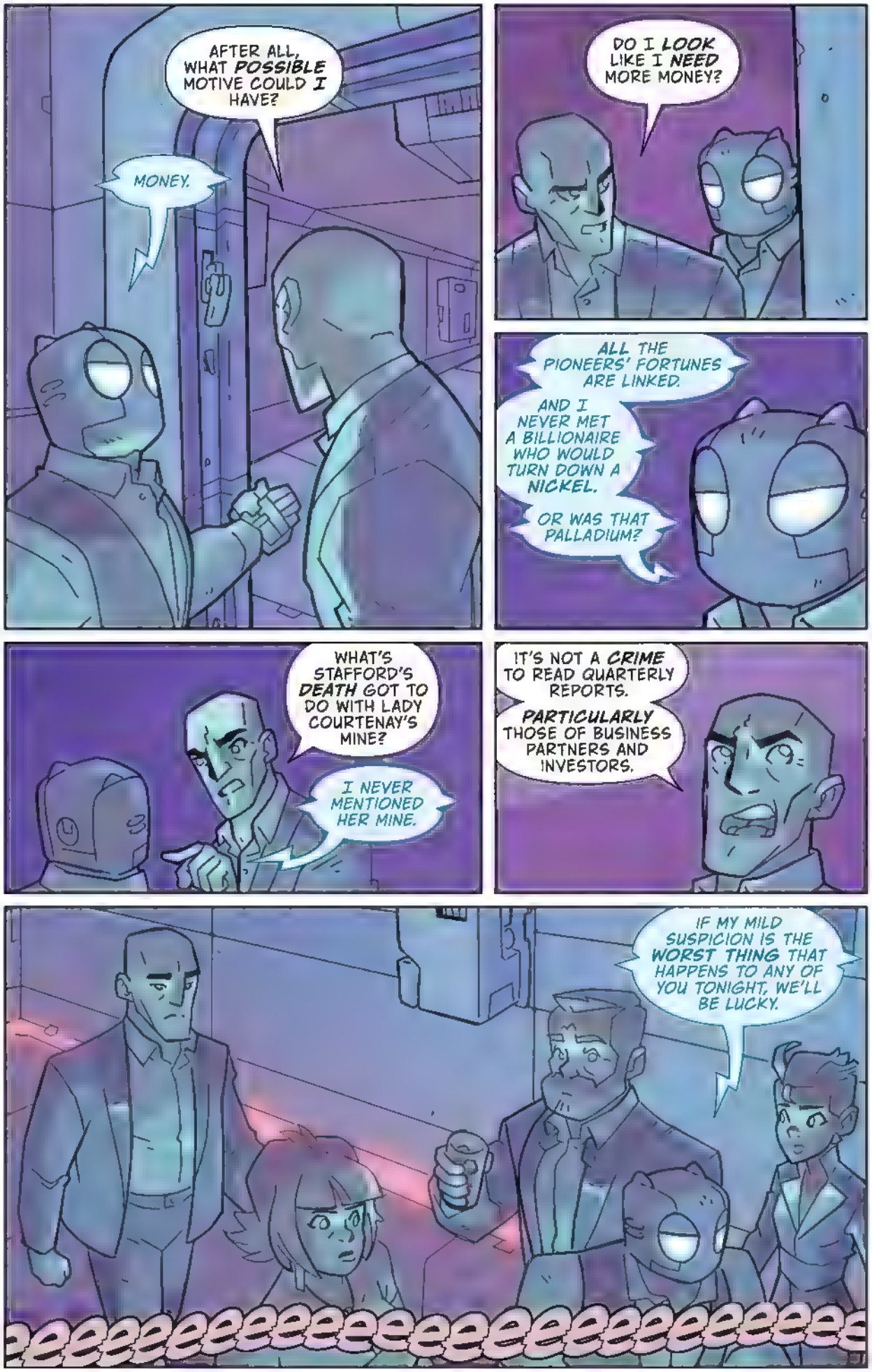
zhiiiiim
OF COURSE IT HAS A FACE LASER.
HRRRG!
ZWAAAAAAP

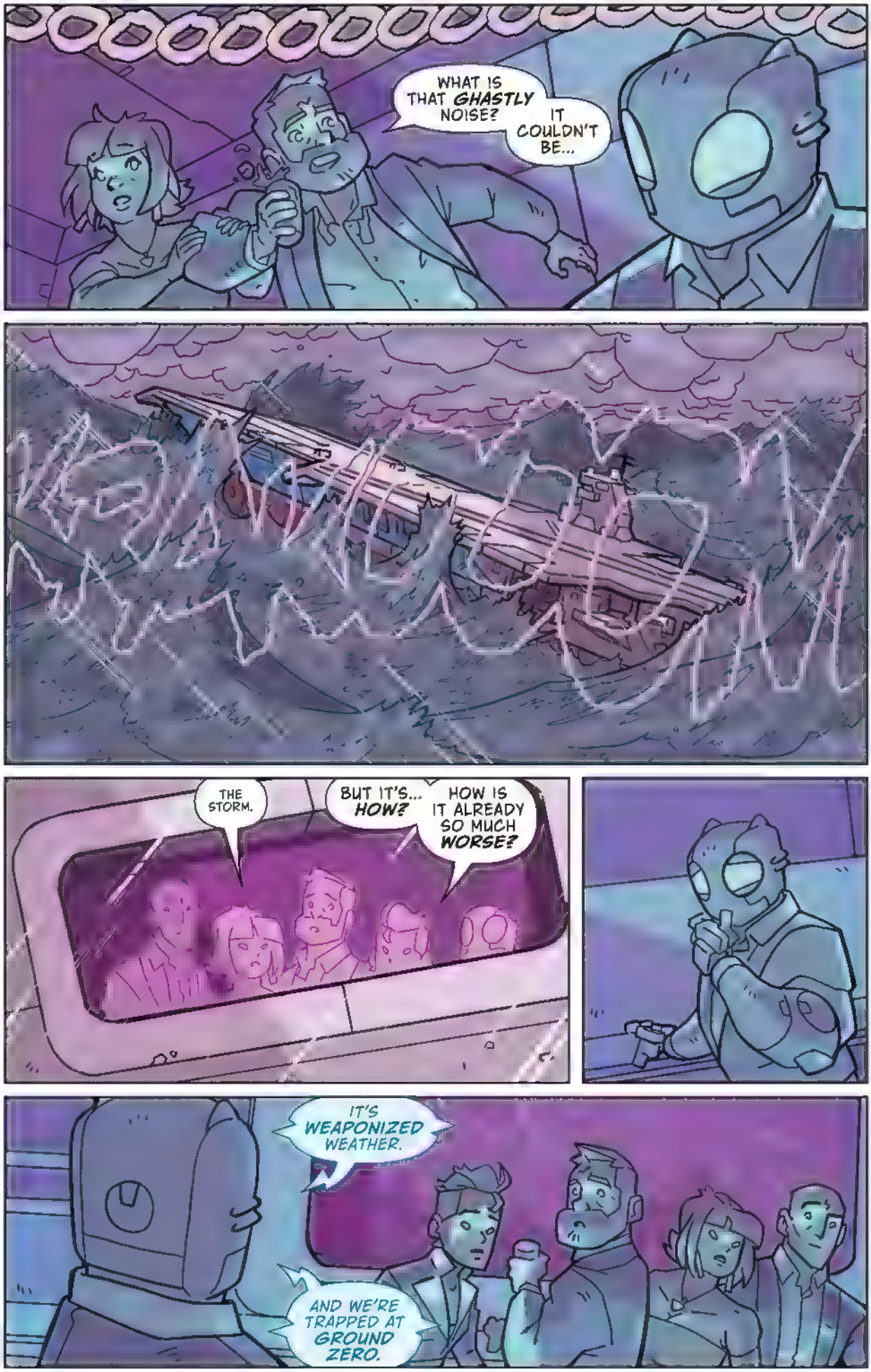

AVIONICS ARE DEAD.
HANG ON!
OH I'M HANGING.
veeeee

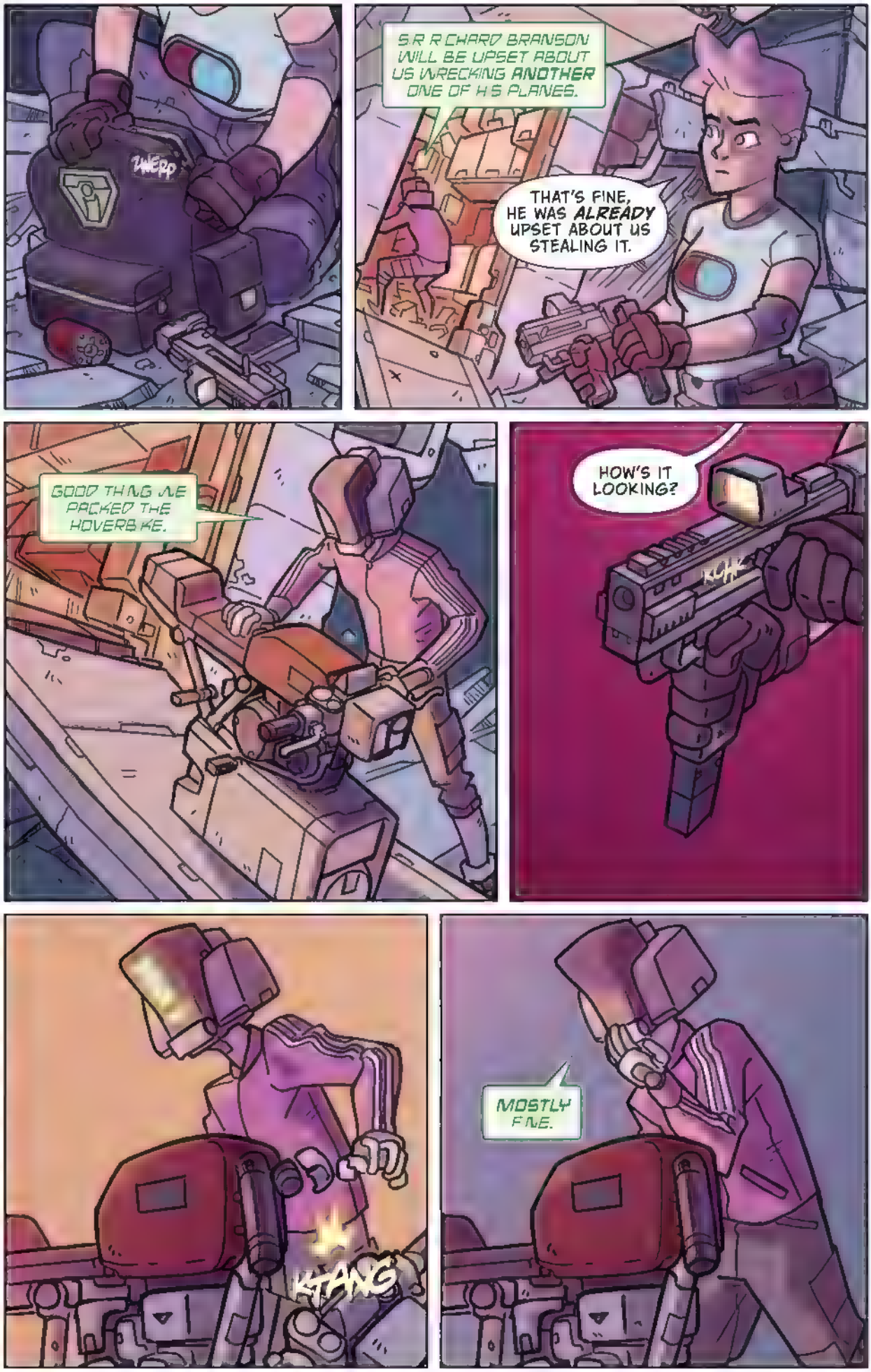

RECONNOITER THAT CRASH SITE.
I WANT TO KNOW WHO THAT WAS.
AND HOW THEY FOUND US SO QUICKLY.

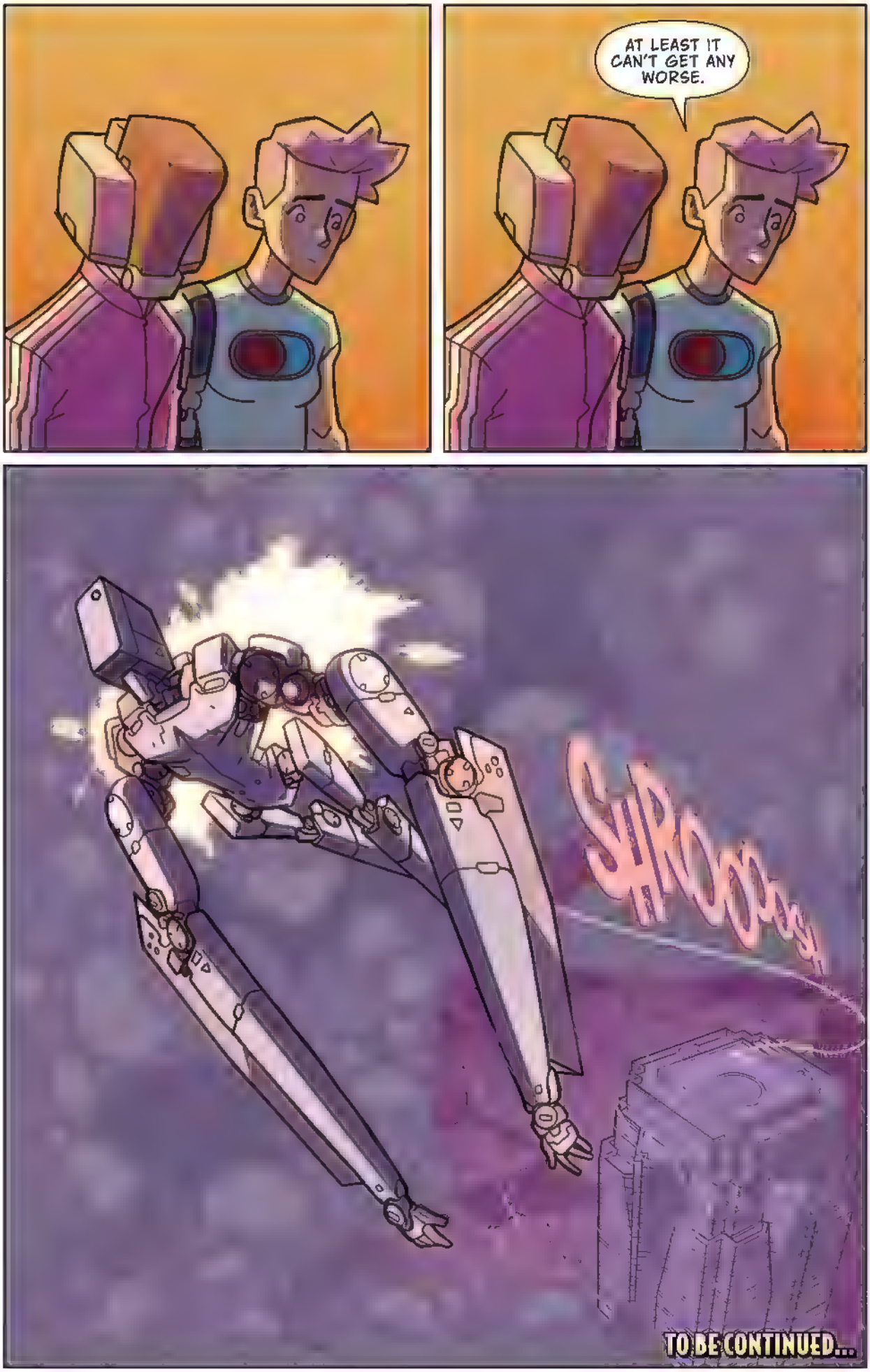

ANY LANDING YOU CAN STUMBLE AWAY FROM.
NEVER GOT TO FIGHT A HELSINGARD BEFORE.
WELL, NOW'S YOUR CHANCE.


YOU DON'T REALLY THINK OF THEM AS SUSPECTS, DO YOU?
GRABAAANK
NO.
I THINK OF ALL OF YOU AS SUSPECTS.
SURELY YOU DON'T INCLUDE ME.
AND WHY DON'T I?
I WAS WITH YOU--THE OTHERS, THEY LEFT.
CAN ANYONE VOUCH FOR YOU?
WHO CAN SAY WHERE ANY OF US WERE AFTER WE SPLIT UP?
THIS NEEDLESS SUSPICION IS TIRESOME.


AFTER ALL, WHAT POSSIBLE MOTIVE COULD I HAVE?
MONEY.
DO I LOOK LIKE I NEED MORE MONEY?
ALL THE PIONEERS' FORTUNES ARE LINKED.
AND I NEVER MET A BILLIONAIRE WHO WOULD TURN DOWN A NICKEL.
OR WAS THAT PALLADIUM?
WHAT'S STAFFORD'S DEATH GOT TO DO WITH LADY COURTENAY'S MINE?
I NEVER MENTIONED HER MINE.
IT'S NOT A CRIME TO READ QUARTERLY REPORTS.
PARTICULARLY THOSE OF BUSINESS PARTNERS AND INVESTORS.
IF MY MILD SUSPICION IS THE WORST THING THAT HAPPENS TO ANY OF YOU TONIGHT, WE'LL BE LUCKY.

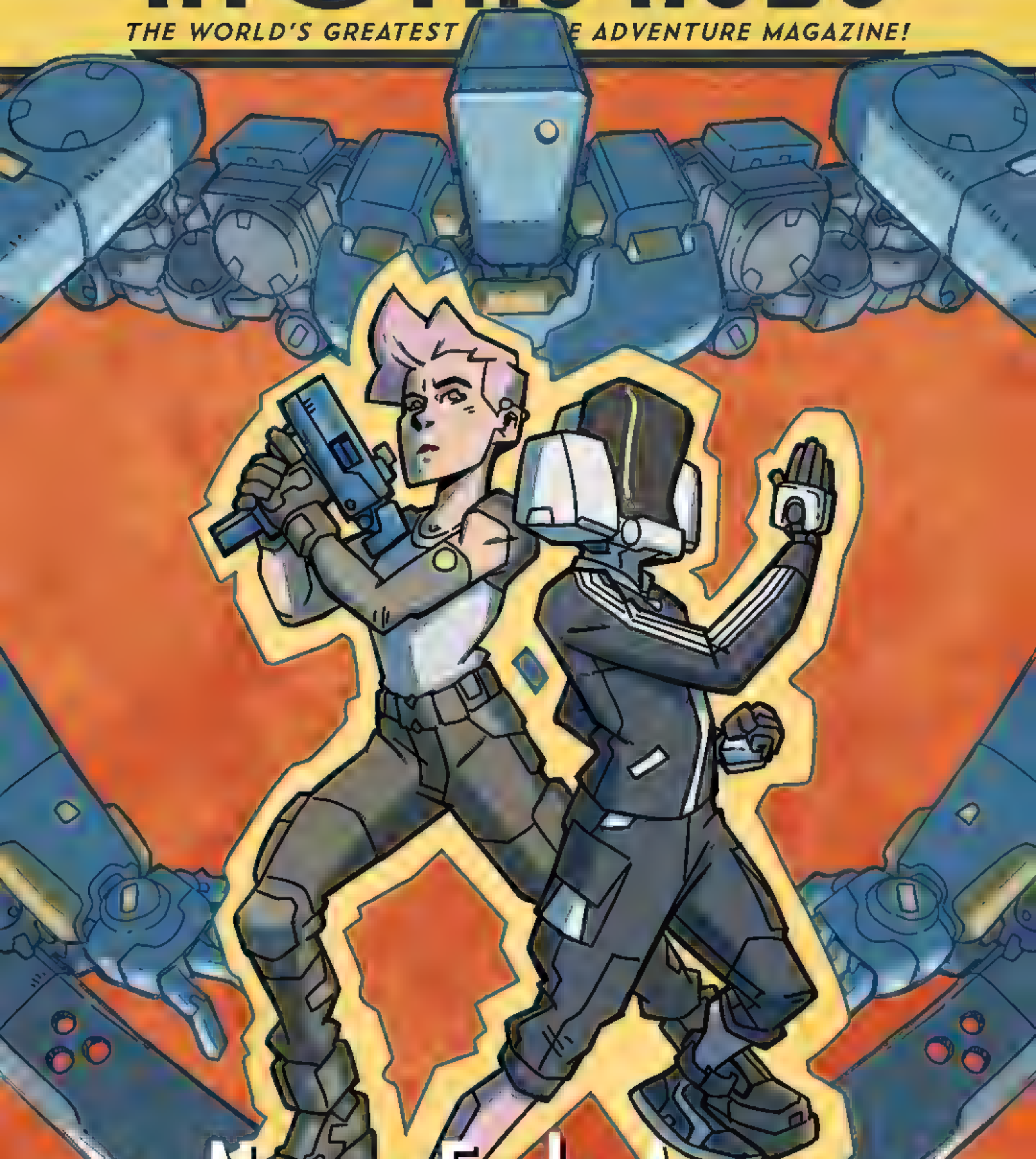

WHAT IS THAT GHASTLY NOISE?
IT COULDN'T BE...
THE STORM.
BUT IT'S... HOW?
HOW IS IT ALREADY SO MUCH WORSE?
IT'S WEAPONIZED WEATHER.
AND WE'RE TRAPPED AT GROUND ZERO.


SIR RICHARD BRANSON WILL BE UPSET ABOUT US WRECKING ANOTHER ONE OF HIS PLANES.
THAT'S FINE, HE WAS ALREADY UPSET ABOUT US STEALING IT.
GOOD THING WE PACKED THE HOVERBIKE.
HOW'S IT LOOKING?
KCHK
KTANG
MOSTLY FINE.


AT LEAST IT CAN'T GET ANY WORSE.
SHROOOOSH
TO BE CONTINUED...

ATOMIC ROBO

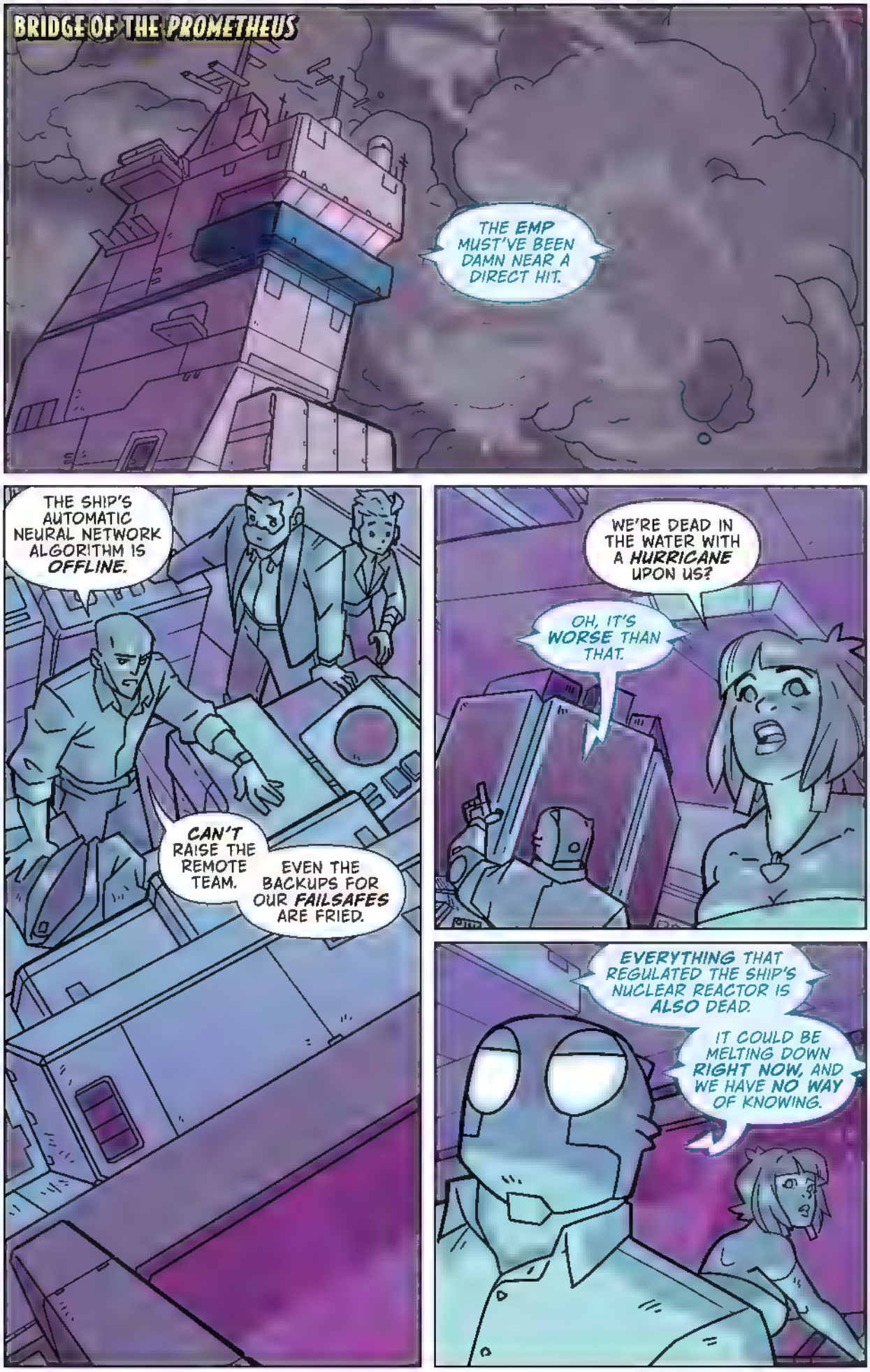
THE WORLD'S GREATEST E ADVENTURE MAGAZINE!



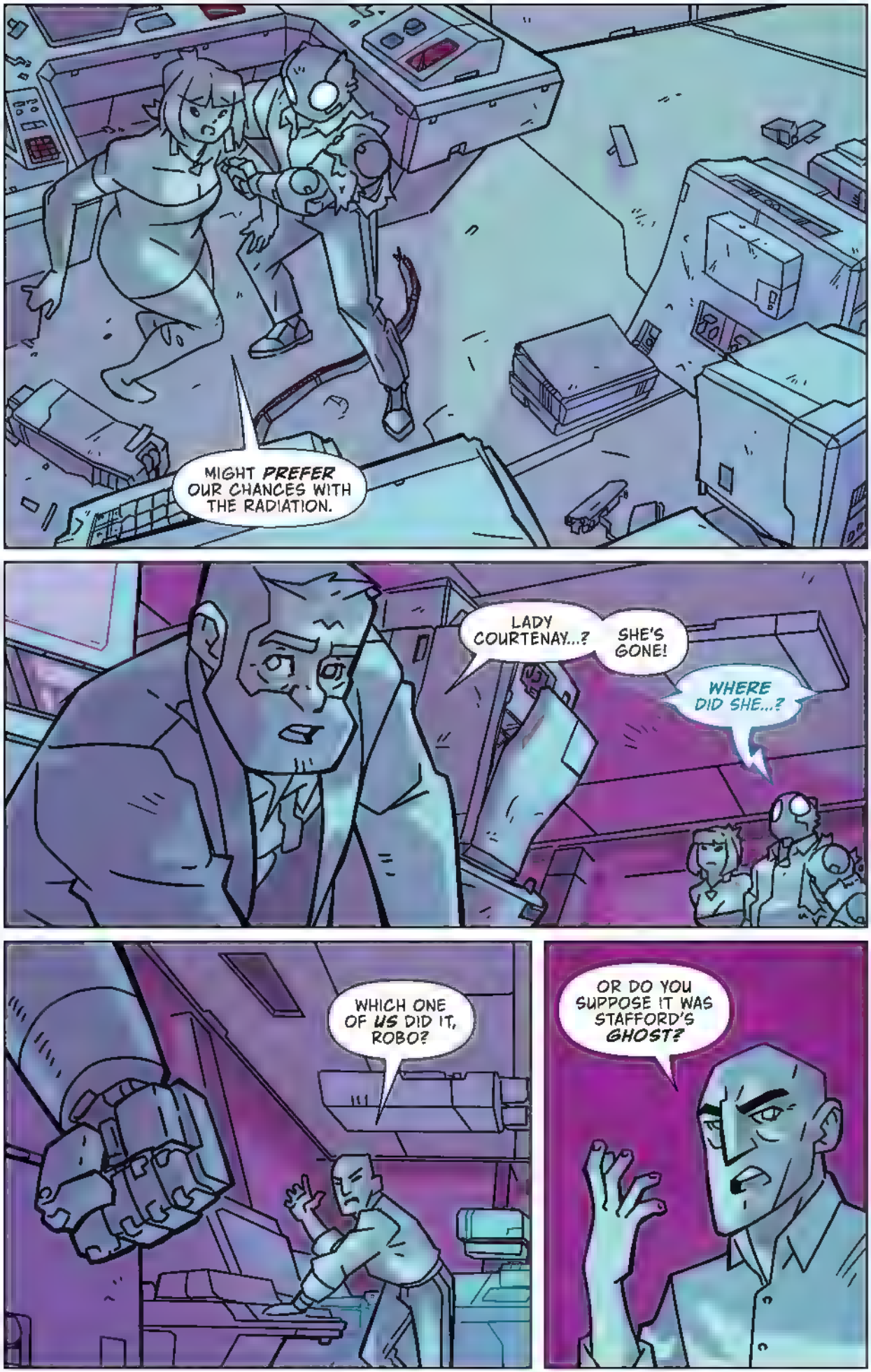
Never Fade Away

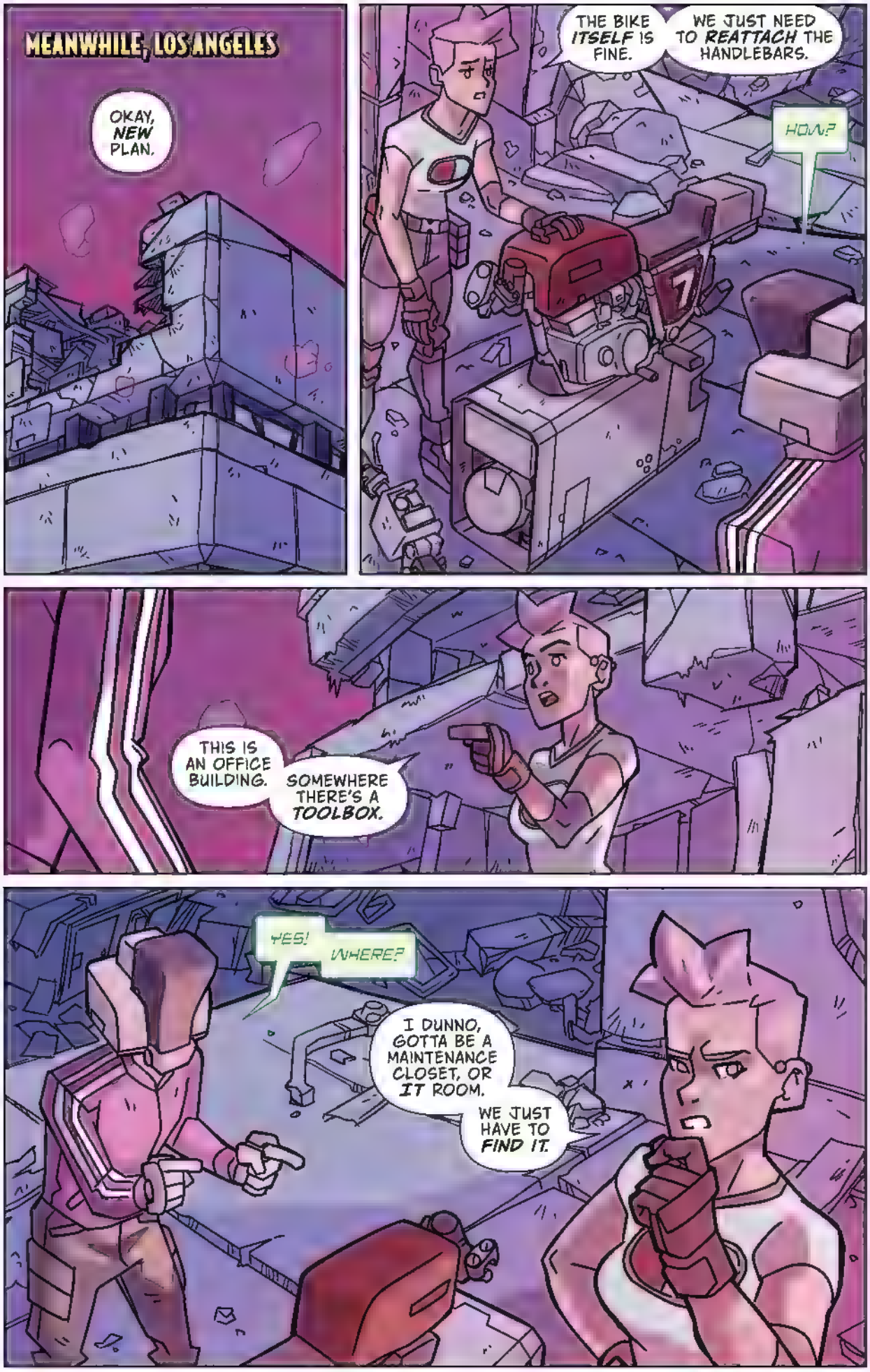
Brian Clevinger / Scott Wegener

Tess Stone / Jeff Powell / Lee Black


BRIDGE OF THE PROMETHEUS
THE EMP MUST'VE BEEN DAMN NEAR A DIRECT HIT.
THE SHIP'S AUTOMATIC NEURAL NETWORK ALGORITHM IS OFFLINE.
CAN'T RAISE THE REMOTE TEAM.
EVEN THE BACKUPS FOR OUR FAILSAFES ARE FRIED.
WE'RE DEAD IN THE WATER WITH A HURRICANE UPON US?
OH, IT'S WORSE THAN THAT.
EVERYTHING THAT REGULATED THE SHIP'S NUCLEAR REACTOR IS ALSO DEAD.
IT COULD BE MELTING DOWN RIGHT NOW, AND WE HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING.

KRAKOOM
krkt
DOWN!


MIGHT PREFER OUR CHANCES WITH THE RADIATION.
LADY COURTENAY...?
SHE'S GONE!
WHERE DID SHE...?
WHICH ONE OF US DID IT, ROBO?
OR DO YOU SUPPOSE IT WAS STAFFORD'S GHOST?


MEANWHILE, LOS ANGELES
OKAY, NEW PLAN.
THE BIKE ITSELF IS FINE.
WE JUST NEED TO REATTACH THE HANDLEBARS.
HOW?
THIS IS AN OFFICE BUILDING.
SOMEWHERE THERE'S A TOOLBOX.
YES!
WHERE?
I DUNNO, GOTTA BE A MAINTENANCE CLOSET, OR IT ROOM.
WE JUST HAVE TO FIND IT.

"THEN WE STORM HELSINGARD'S TOWER, SHUT DOWN HIS WEATHER MACHINE, AND SAVE THE CITY.
"MAYBE THE WORLD.
"AND HOPEFULLY ROBO.
MONDAYS
"THIS SOUNDS MORE LIKE A SERIES OF GOALS THAN A PLAN."
"I'M OPEN TO HEAR YOUR IDEAS."
"I'M FASTER. I'LL SEARCH FOR THE TOOLS."
THAT WAS EASY

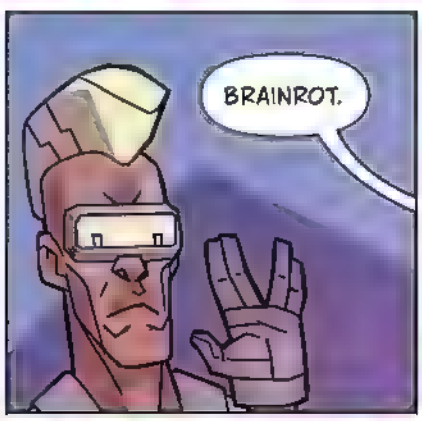
OH.
HI IM ALAN!
CLK
kachak
CLK
CLK
AND WHO MIGHT YOU BE?

HOPE ALAN'S HAVING BETTER LUCK THAN ME.
NOT SO MUCH AS A SCREWDRIVER.
JUST SEVEN DAMN HEX WRENCHES.
FOUND SOME TOOLS!
AND SOME BACKUP.
BACKUP?
WHAT'RE YOU--
!

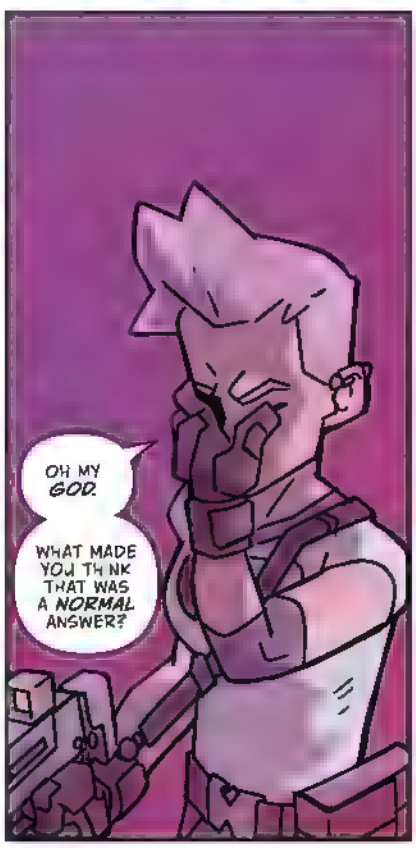
EASY.
TAKE ANOTHER STEP AND I OPEN FIRE.
THAT'S EASY.
NOT HERE TO RIP YA.

THAT'S COOL HACKER LINGO FOR "K...."
IT'S DERIVED FROM R.I.P.

THANK YOU, ALAN.
WHO ARE THEY?


BRAINROT.

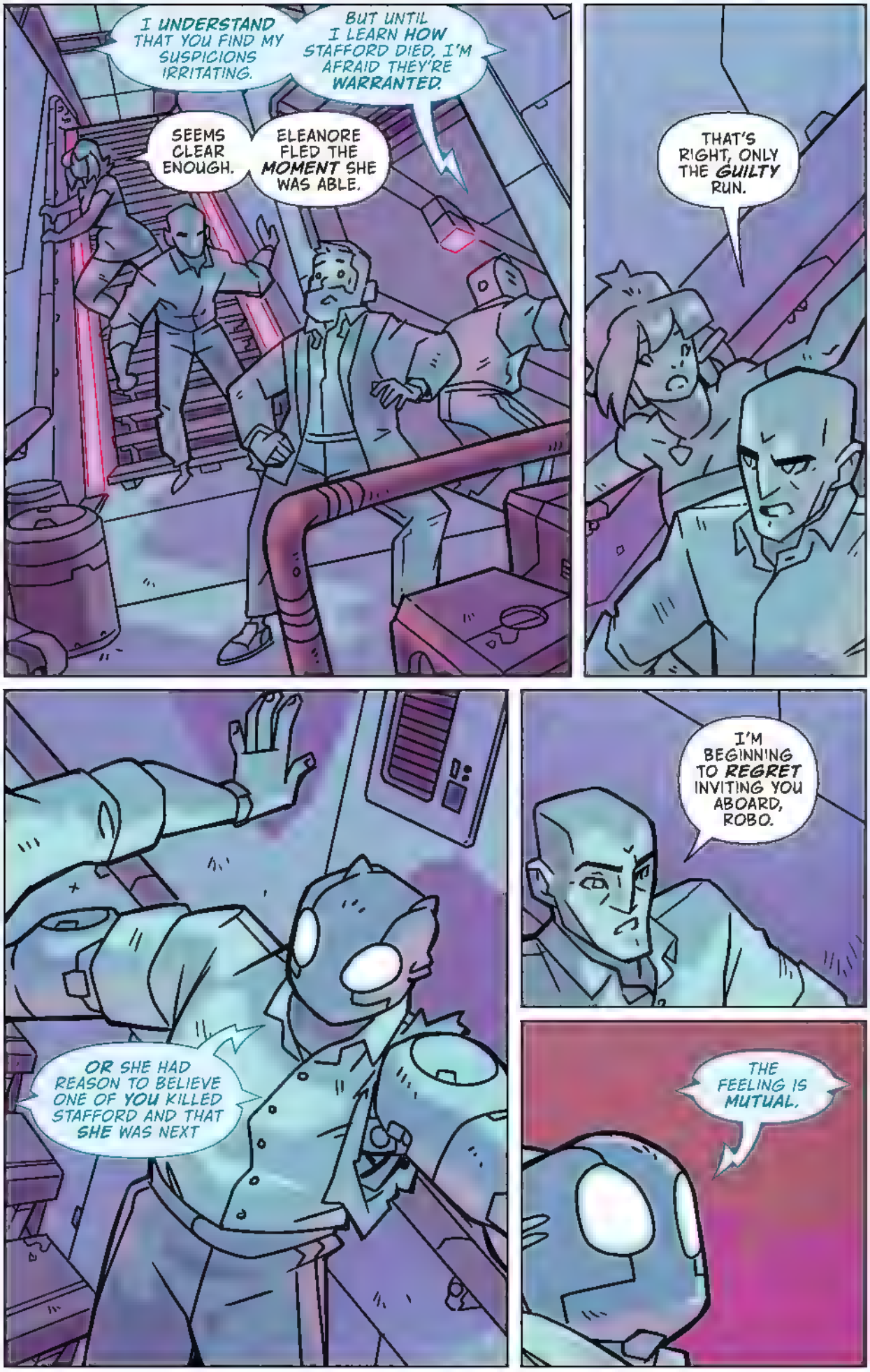
DECKHEAD.

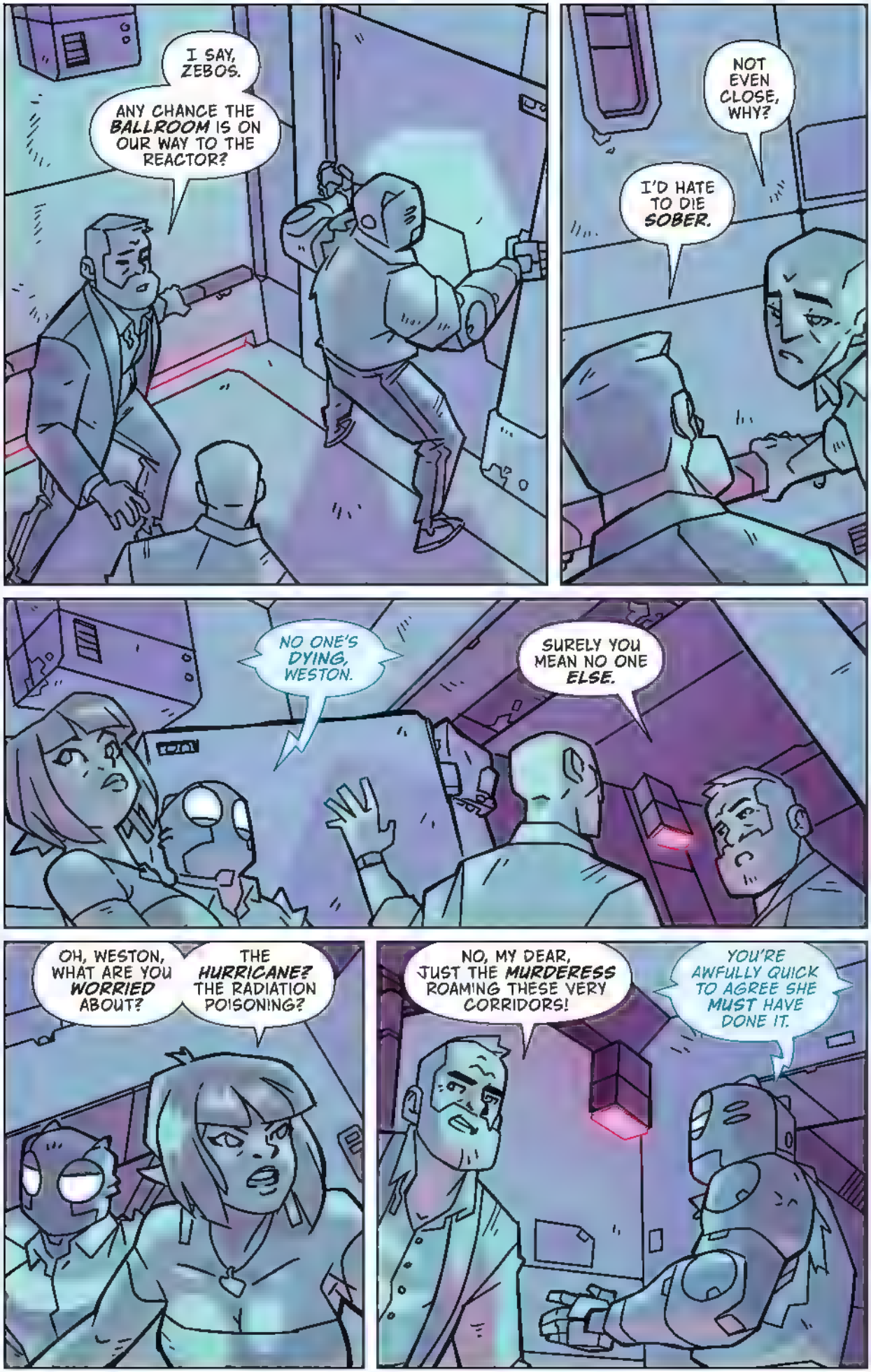

OH MY GOD.
WHAT MADE YOU THINK THAT WAS A NORMAL ANSWER?

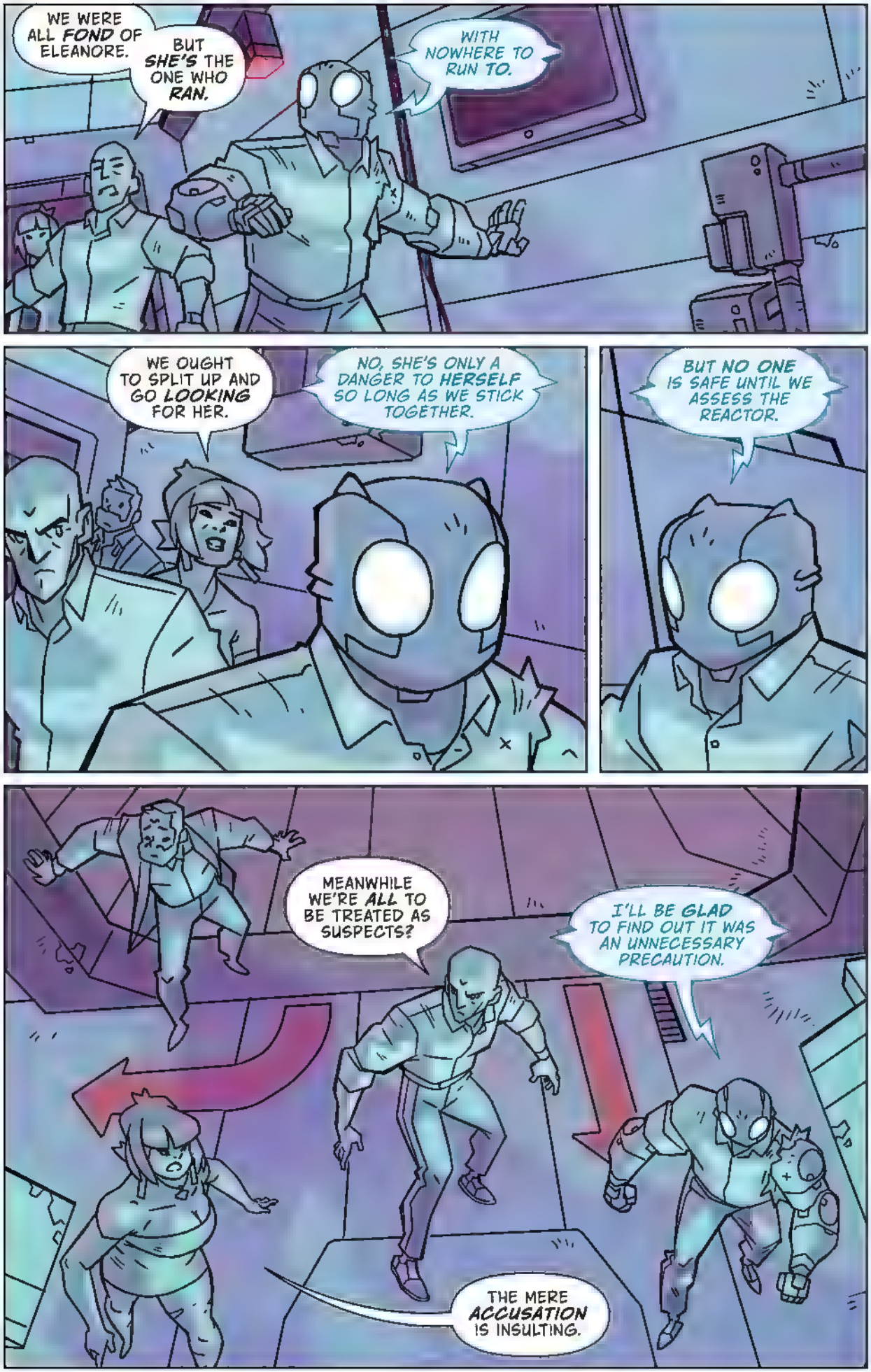
KILLZONE.

AND I'M MR. CHROME.
WE'RE THE CYBERPUNKS.

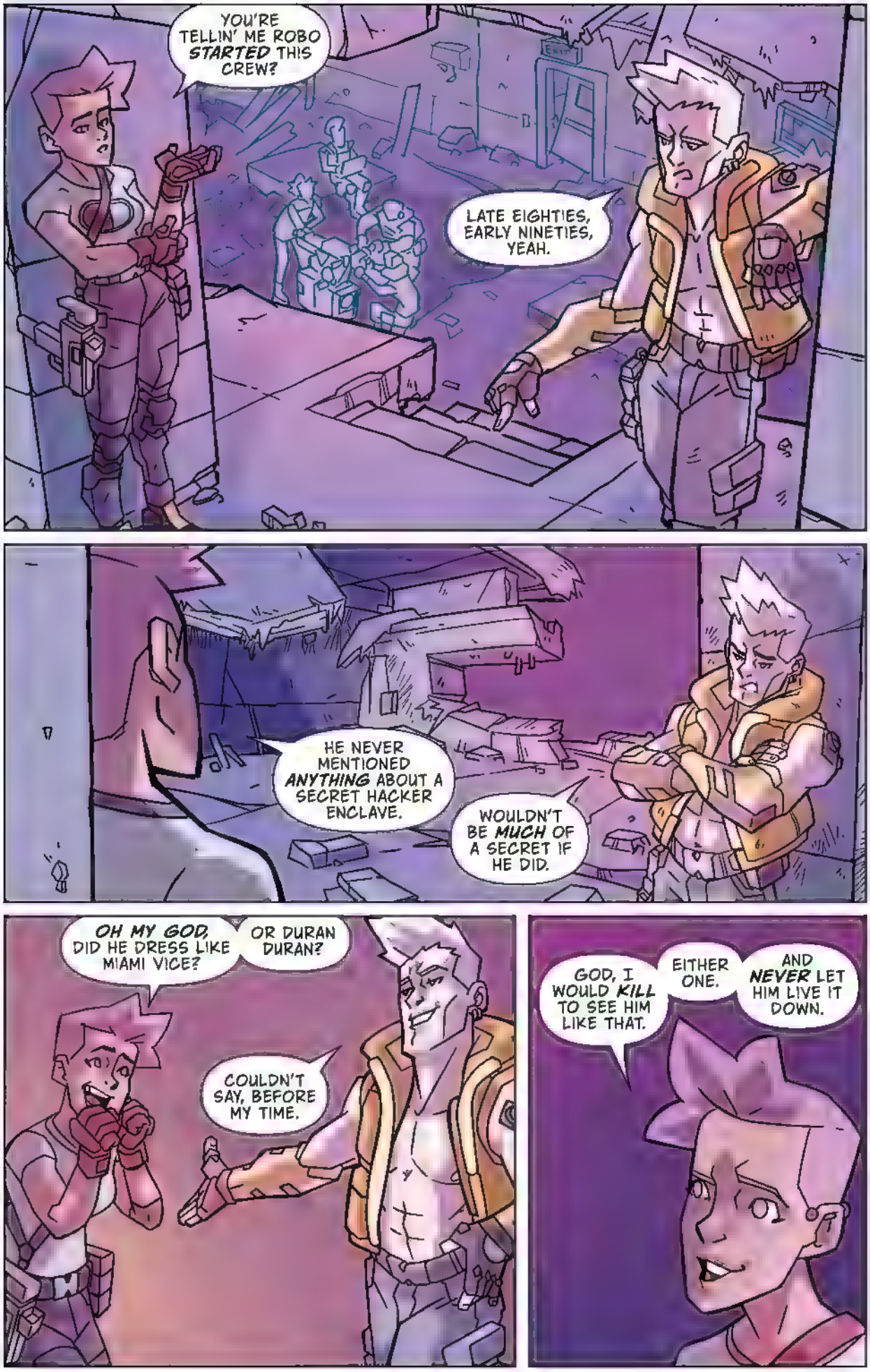
WE'RE HIGH-TECH LOWLIFES ROBBING BACK FROM THE RICH WHAT THEY TOOK FROM THE POOR.
WHILE REDEFINING THE ONTOLOGICAL METASCAPES OF THE FUTURE!
WITH C4!
OKAY, YEAH.
THAT IS PRETTY CYBERPUNK.
PLUS THEY MET ROBO!
WHEN!
LIFETIME AGO.
CAN WE KEEP 'EM?
YOU GUYS KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT WEAPONIZED WEATHER OR HOVERBIKE REPAIR?
ENOUGH TO BE DANGEROUS.


I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU FIND MY SUSPICIONS IRRITATING.
BUT UNTIL I LEARN HOW STAFFORD DIED, I'M AFRAID THEY'RE WARRANTED.
SEEMS CLEAR ENOUGH.
ELEANORE FLED THE MOMENT SHE WAS ABLE.
THAT'S RIGHT, ONLY THE GUILTY RUN.
I'M BEGINNING TO REGRET INVITING YOU ABOARD, ROBO.
OR SHE HAD REASON TO BELIEVE ONE OF YOU KILLED STAFFORD AND THAT SHE WAS NEXT
THE FEELING IS MUTUAL.

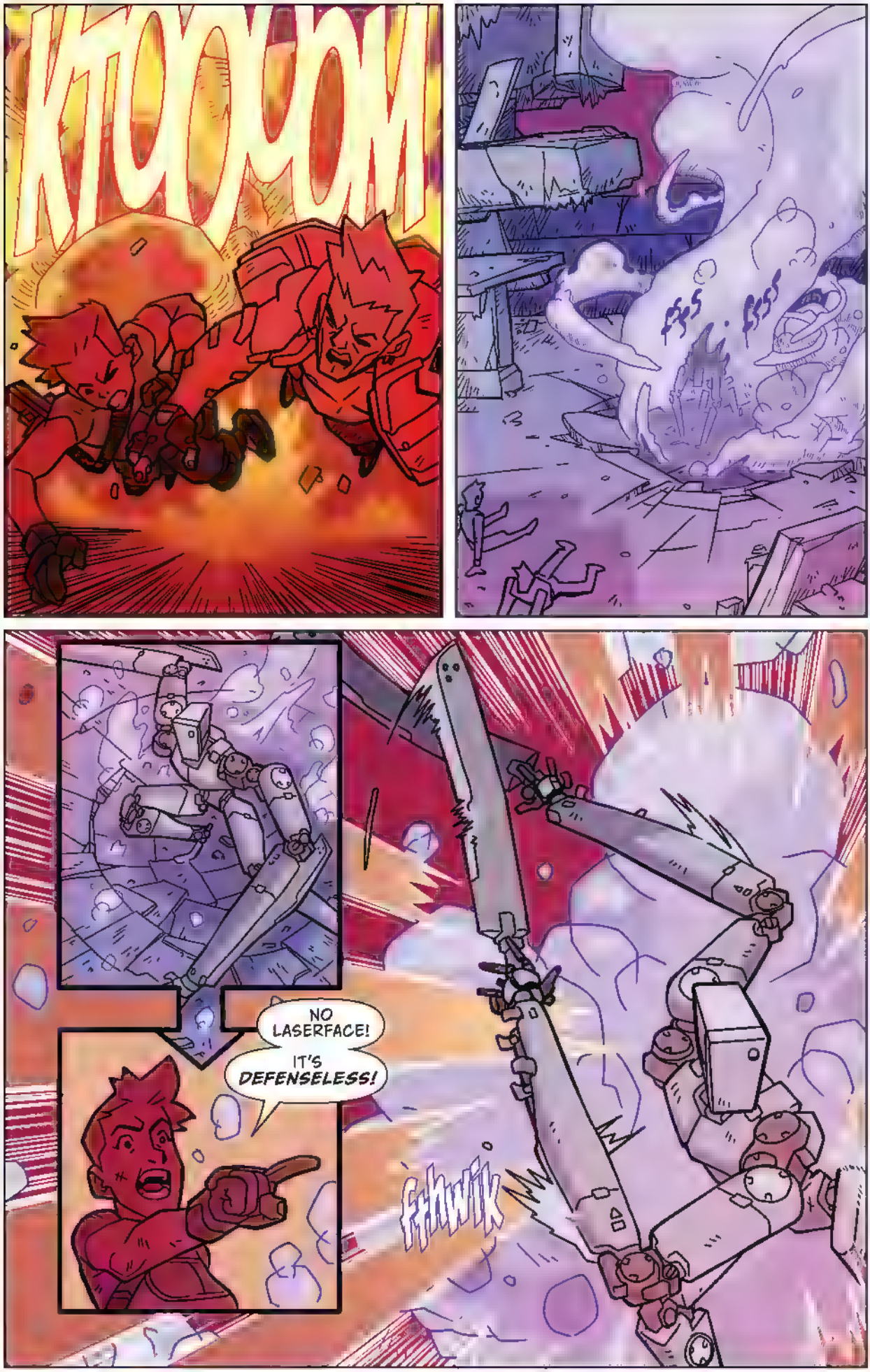

I SAY, ZEBOS.
ANY CHANCE THE BALLROOM IS ON OUR WAY TO THE REACTOR?
NOT EVEN CLOSE, WHY?
I'D HATE TO DIE SOBER.
NO ONE'S DYING, WESTON.
SURELY YOU MEAN NO ONE ELSE.
OH, WESTON, WHAT ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT?
THE HURRICANE? THE RADIATION POISONING?
NO, MY DEAR, JUST THE MURDERESS ROAMING THESE VERY CORRIDORS!
YOU'RE AWFULLY QUICK TO AGREE SHE MUST HAVE DONE IT.

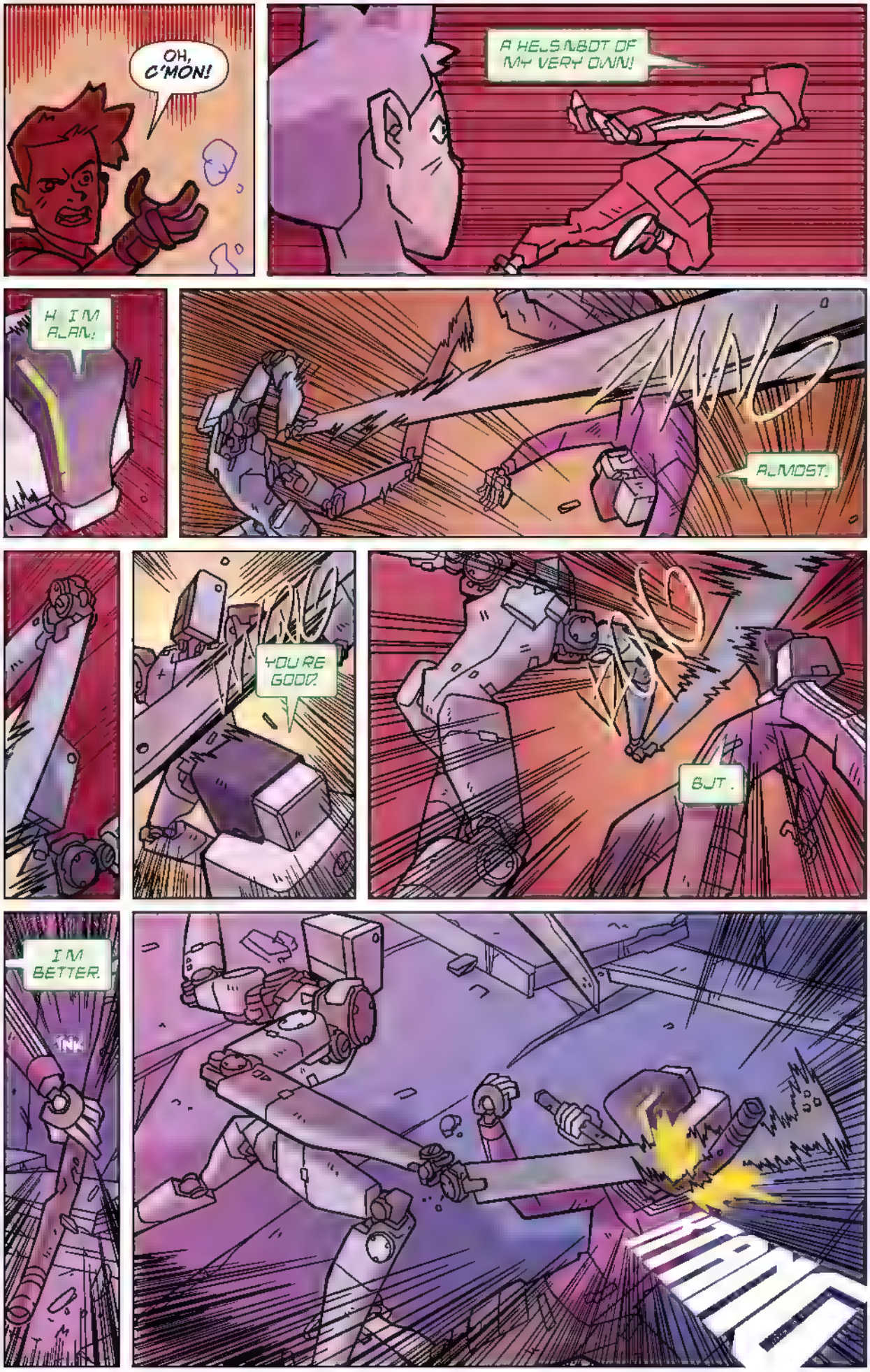

WE WERE ALL FOND OF ELEANORE.
BUT SHE'S THE ONE WHO RAN.
WITH NOWHERE TO RUN TO.
WE OUGHT TO SPLIT UP AND GO LOOKING FOR HER.
NO, SHE'S ONLY A DANGER TO HERSELF SO LONG AS WE STICK TOGETHER.
BUT NO ONE IS SAFE UNTIL WE ASSESS THE REACTOR.
MEANWHILE WE'RE ALL TO BE TREATED AS SUSPECTS?
I'LL BE GLAD TO FIND OUT IT WAS AN UNNECESSARY PRECAUTION.
THE MERE ACCUSATION IS INSULTING.

THE DOCTOR DOTH PROTEST *TOO* MUCH, EH?
WESTON, THAT REALLY *IS* THE LIMIT.
IT'S NO SECRET YOU *LOATHED* STAFFORD.
SO DID *YOU.*
WE *ALL* DID.
OF COURSE, HE WAS *ODIOUS.*
BUT HE POSED *NO THREAT* TO YOU OR ME, GEOFFREY.
WHEREAS THE SUCCESS OF STAFFORD'S AUTONOMOUS SOLDIER PROGRAM WOULD GIVE *DARPA* CAUSE TO TERMINATE DORMER'S PROJECT.

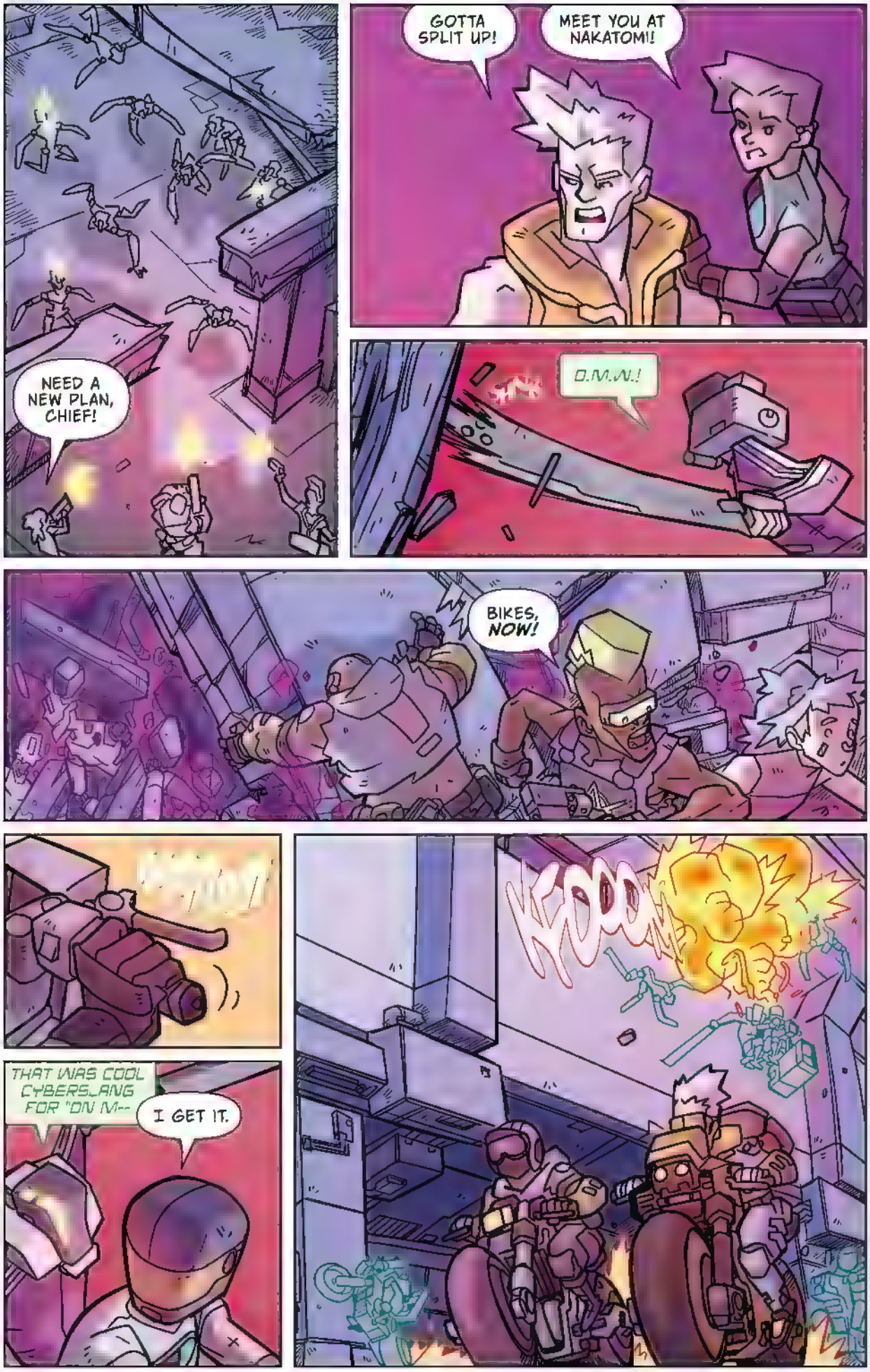

YOU'RE TELLIN' ME ROBO *STARTED* THIS CREW?
LATE EIGHTIES, EARLY NINETIES, YEAH.
HE NEVER MENTIONED *ANYTHING* ABOUT A SECRET HACKER ENCLAVE.
WOULDN'T BE *MUCH* OF A SECRET IF HE DID.
OH MY GOD, DID HE DRESS LIKE MIAMI VICE?
OR DURAN DURAN?
COULDN'T SAY, BEFORE MY TIME.
GOD, I WOULD *KILL* TO SEE HIM LIKE THAT.
EITHER ONE.
AND *NEVER* LET HIM LIVE IT DOWN.

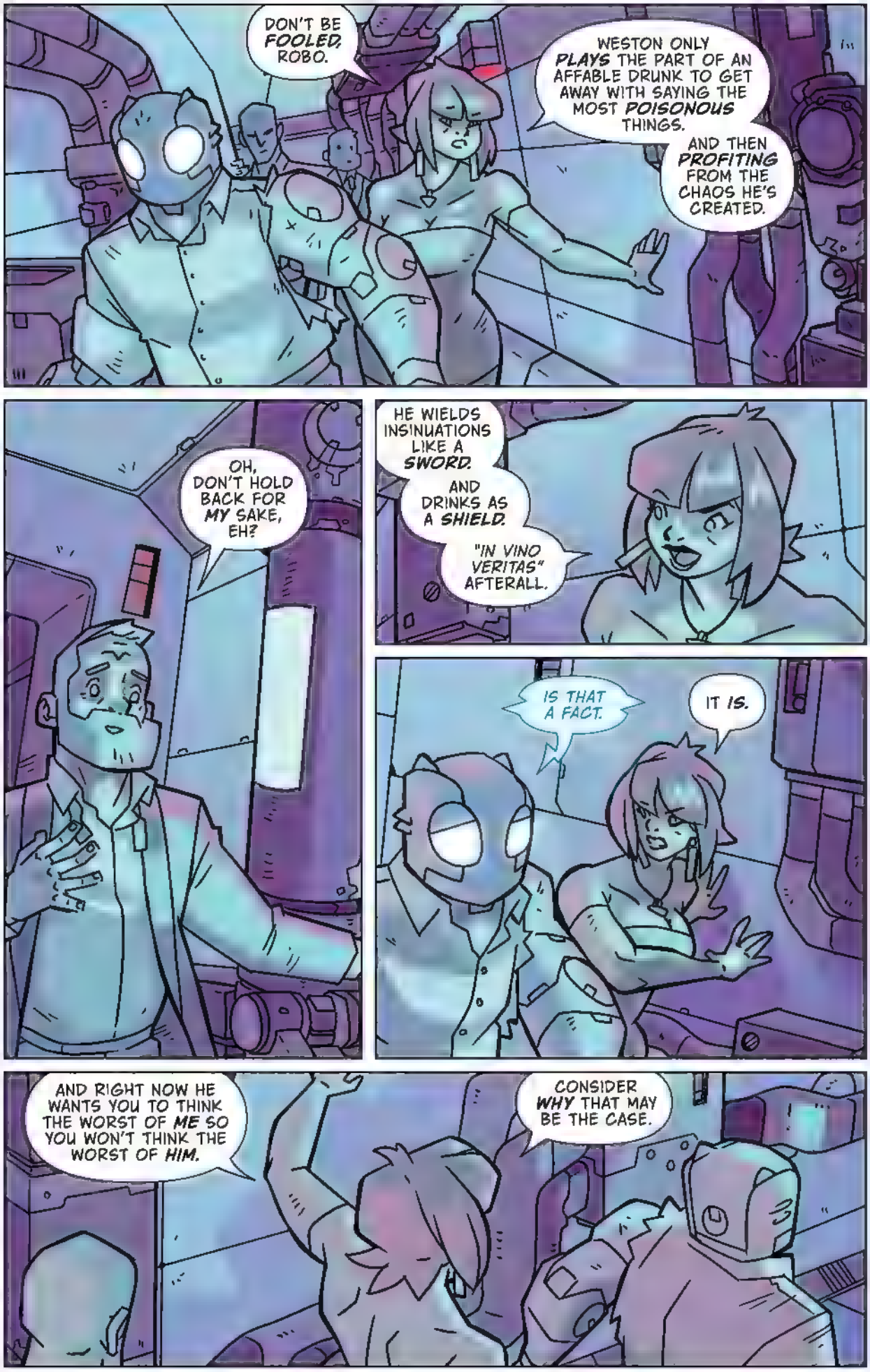
WE GOT MAYBE AN HOUR BEFORE THE STORM OVERTAKES THE CITY.
DIRECT ASSAULT'S OUR BEST BET.
MAXIMUM CHAOS, MINIMUM TIME.
THERE IT IS.
YEAH!
IT'LL BE A SUICIDE RUN IF WE DON'T HAVE A DISTRACTION.
SHROOOSH


KTOOOOM
FSSS
FSSS
NO LASERFACE!
IT'S DEFENSELESS!
FHWIK


OH, C'MON!
A HELSNBOT OF MY VERY OWN!
HI I'M ALAN.
ALMOST.
YOU'RE GOOD.
BUT.
I'M BETTER.
TNK
KRAK

OH NO, YOUR WEAK-POINT!
SHINK
AN ME KICK!
THIS IS NO TIME--
--TO LOSE YOUR HEAD!
THIS IS HIS LEAST BAD BANTER SO FAR.
I THINK THEY FOUND US.


NEED A NEW PLAN, CHIEF!
GOTTA SPLIT UP!
MEET YOU AT NAKATOMI!
O.M.N.!
BIKES, NOW!
THAT WAS COOL CYBERSLANG FOR "ON M--
I GET IT.
KOOM

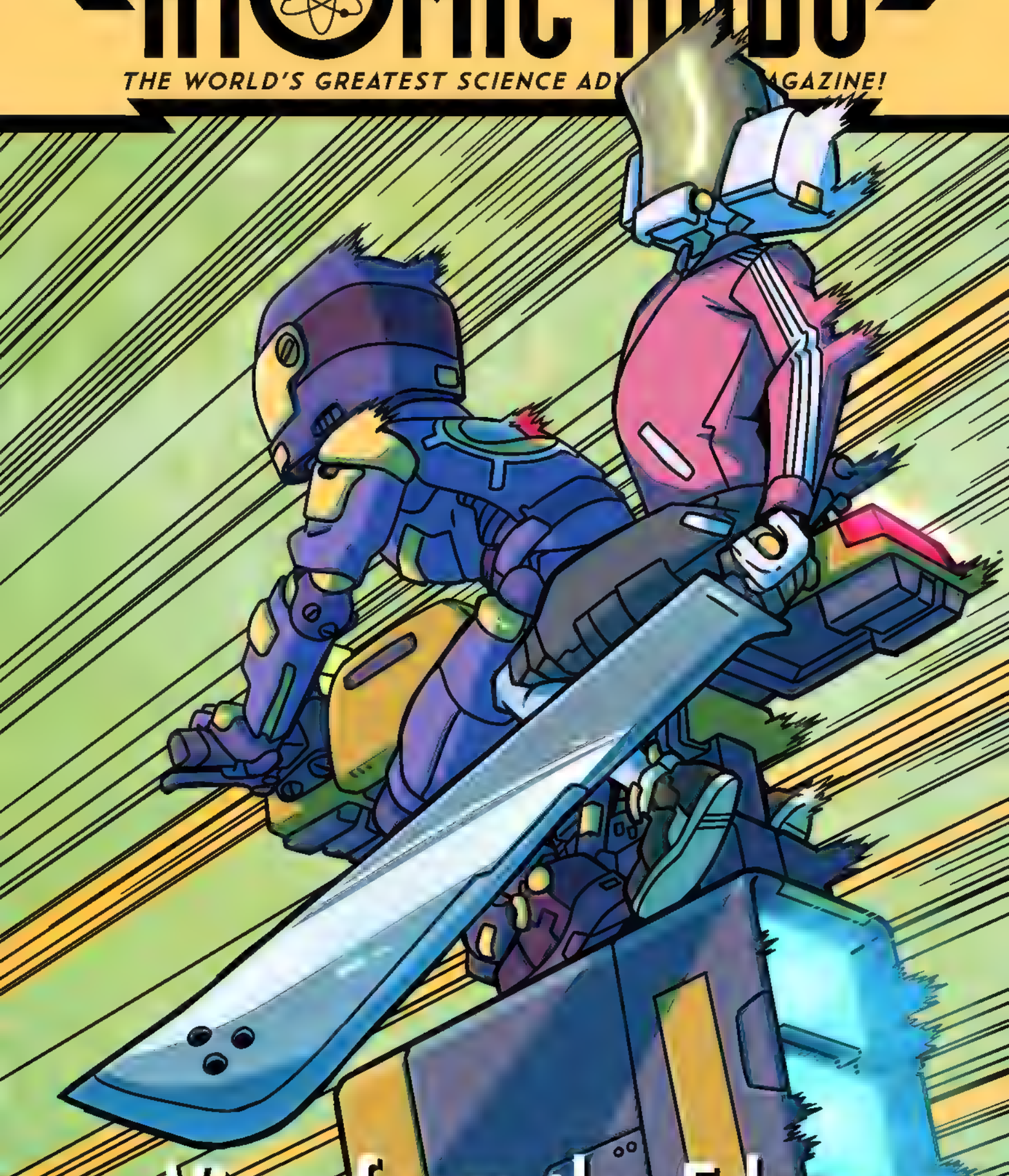

DON'T BE FOOLED, ROBO.
WESTON ONLY PLAYS THE PART OF AN AFFABLE DRUNK TO GET AWAY WITH SAYING THE MOST POISONOUS THINGS.
AND THEN PROFITING FROM THE CHAOS HE'S CREATED.
OH, DON'T HOLD BACK FOR MY SAKE, EH?
HE WIELDS INSINUATIONS LIKE A SWORD.
AND DRINKS AS A SHIELD.
"IN VINO VERITAS" AFTERALL.
IS THAT A FACT.
IT IS.
AND RIGHT NOW HE WANTS YOU TO THINK THE WORST OF ME SO YOU WON'T THINK THE WORST OF HIM.
CONSIDER WHY THAT MAY BE THE CASE.

Creeeeeaaaak
HANG ON.
SHE'LL RIGHT HERSELF SOON.
CREEEAK
COULD BE A LITTLE SOONER!
I'M BEGINNING TO ENVY STAFFORD.
End!

SHARKBOY
LAVAGIRL
AAHH!!
TO BE CONTINUED...

ATOMIC ROBO

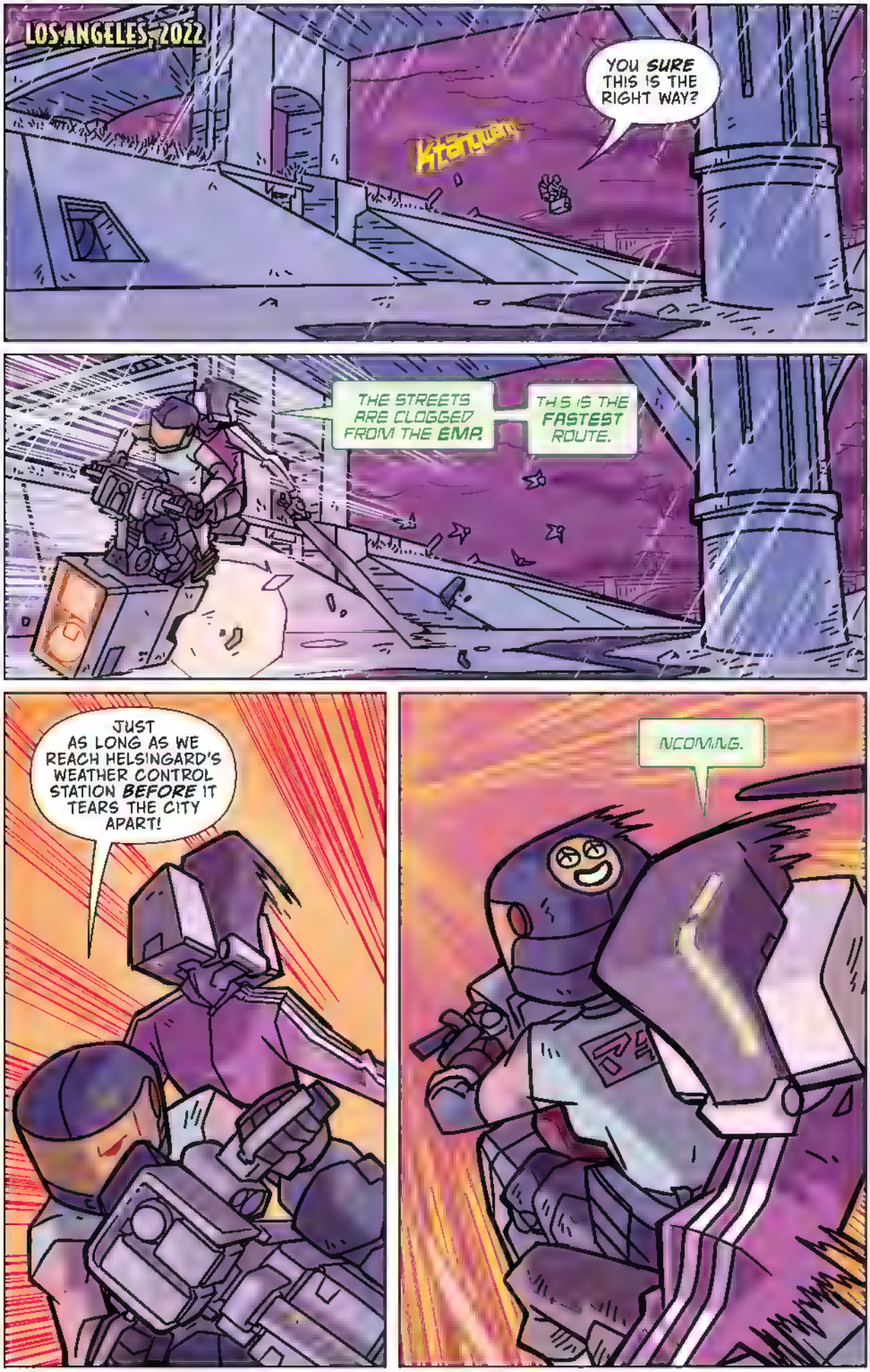
THE WORLD'S GREATEST SCIENCE AD[illegible]AGAZINE!

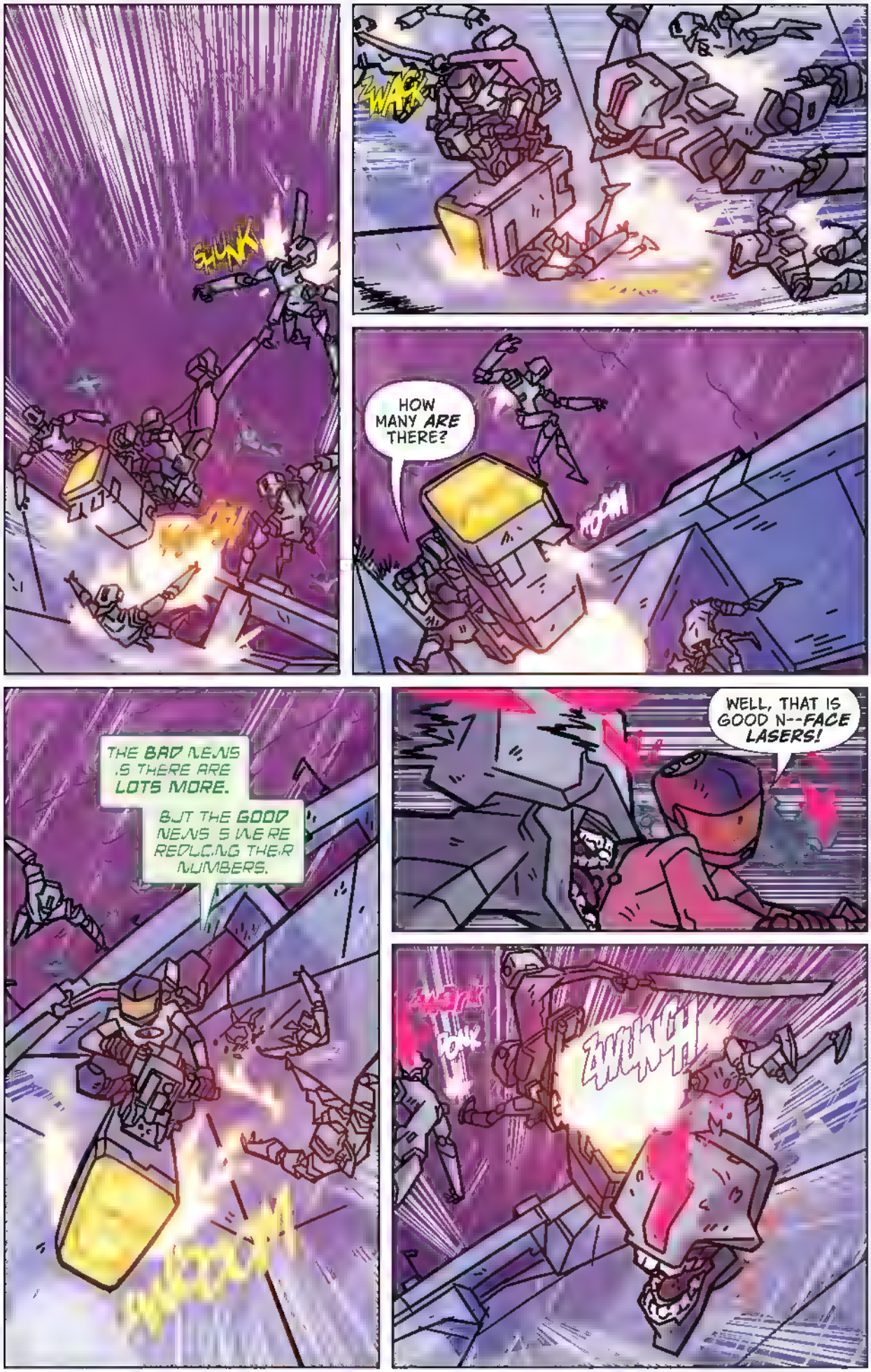


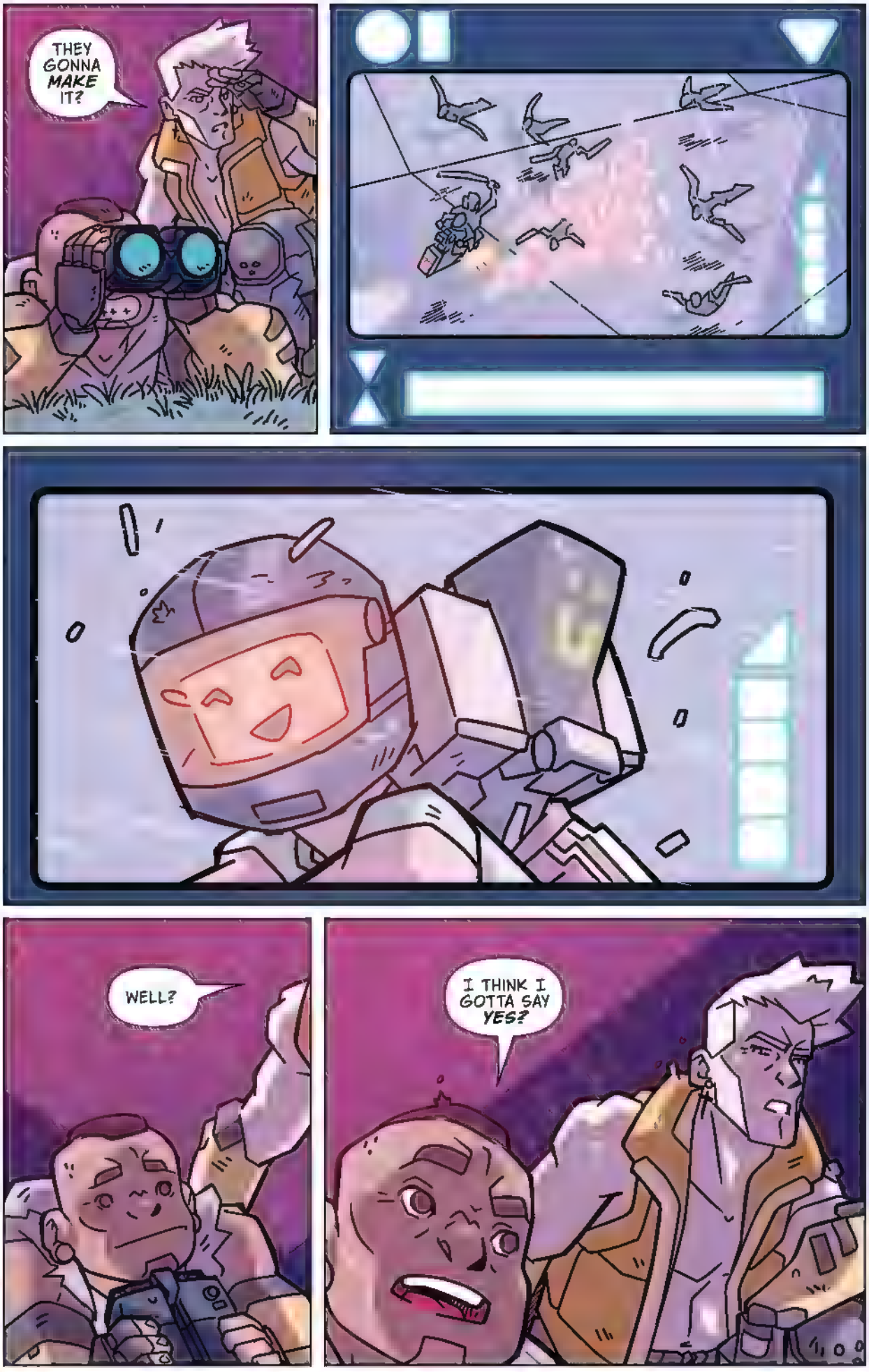
View from the Edge

Brian Clevinger / Scott Wegener

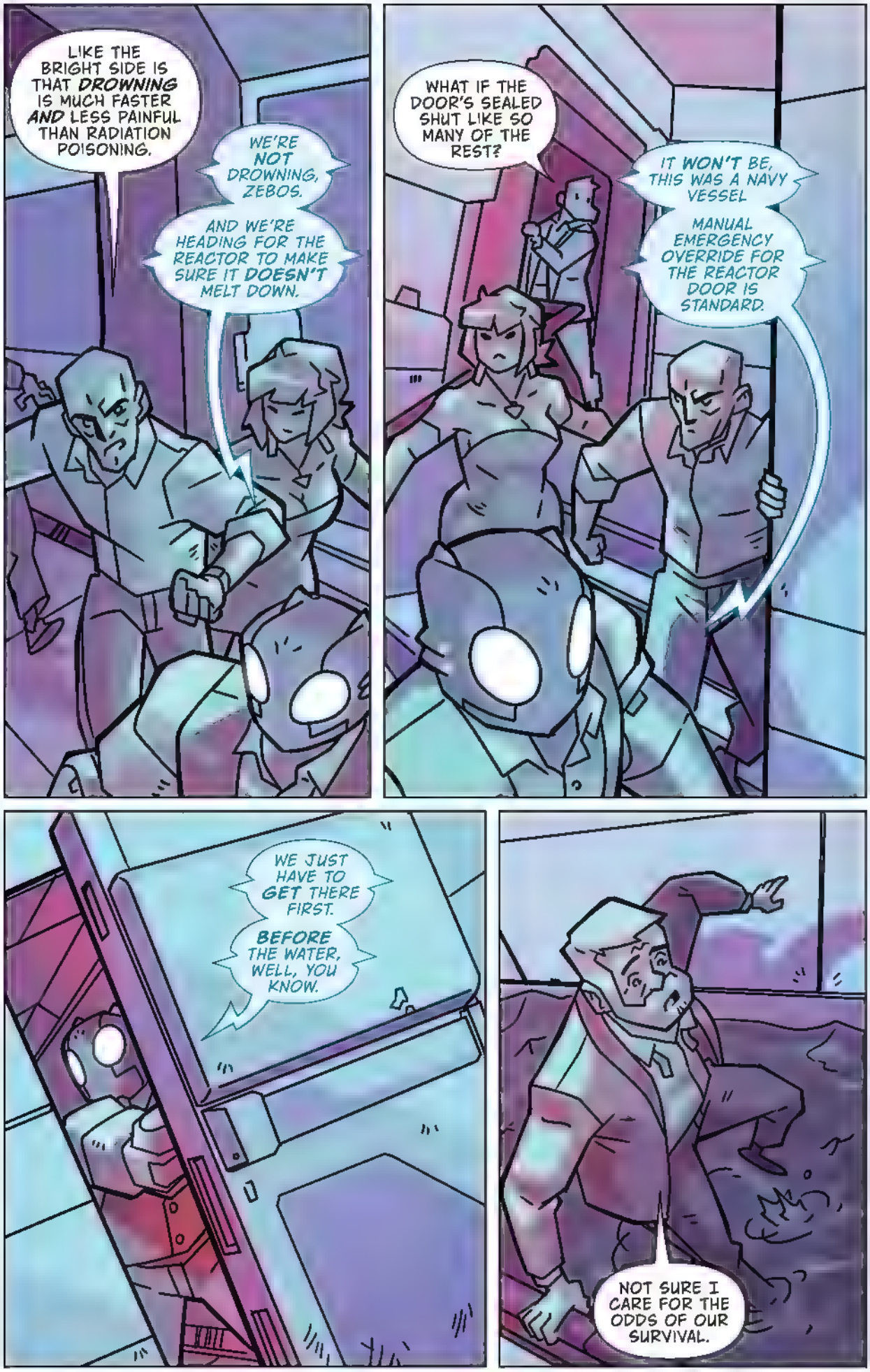
Tess Stone / Jeff Powell / Lee Black


LOS ANGELES, 2022
YOU SURE THIS IS THE RIGHT WAY?
Ktarquan
THE STREETS ARE CLOGGED FROM THE EMP.
THIS IS THE FASTEST ROUTE.
JUST AS LONG AS WE REACH HELSINGARD'S WEATHER CONTROL STATION BEFORE IT TEARS THE CITY APART!
INCOMING.

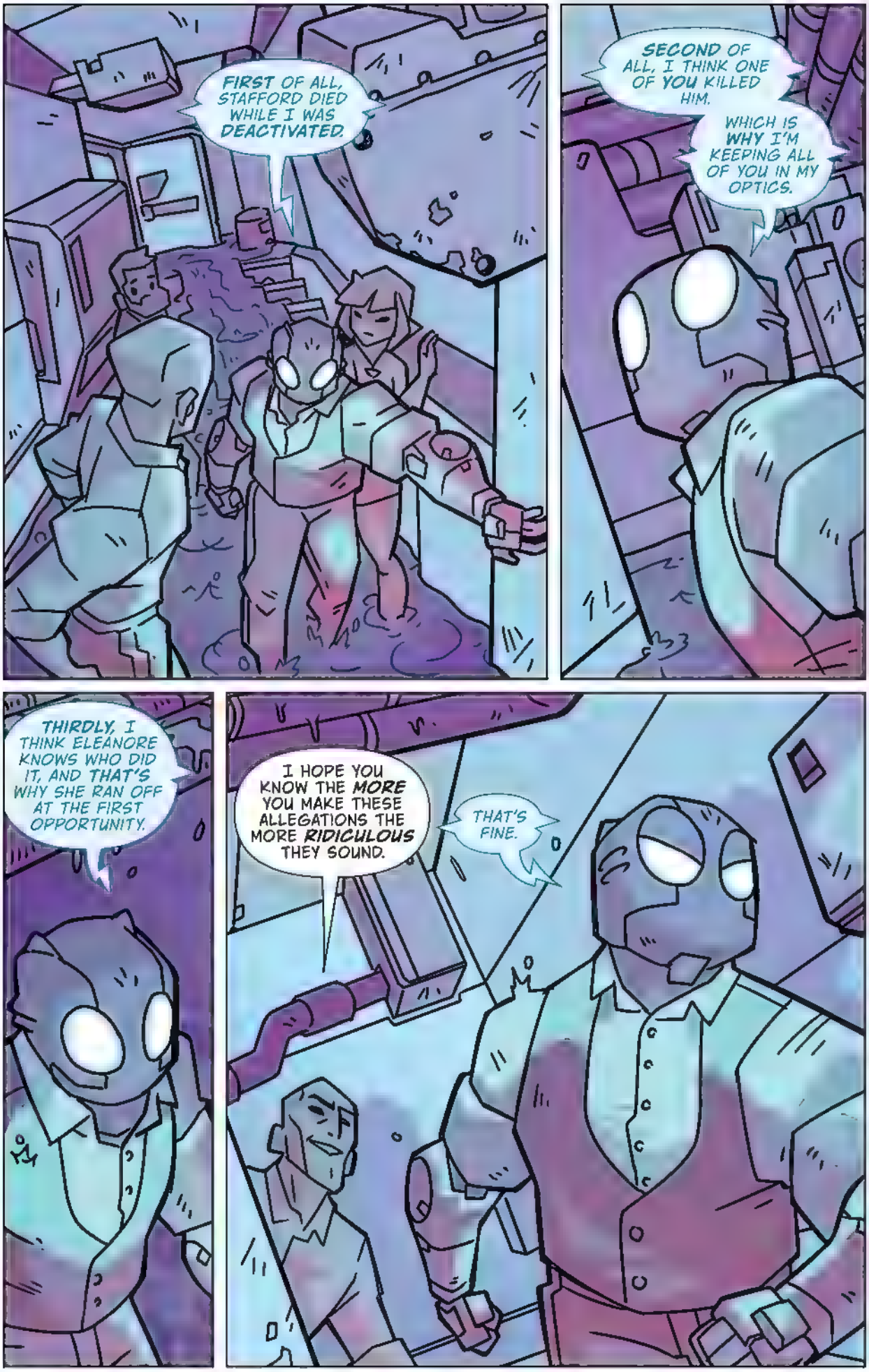

SHUNK
KWAK
HOW MANY ARE THERE?
KOOM
THE BAD NEWS IS THERE ARE LOTS MORE.
BUT THE GOOD NEWS IS WE'RE REDUCING THEIR NUMBERS.
WELL, THAT IS GOOD N--FACE LASERS!
SWARK
FONK
ZWONK


THEY GONNA MAKE IT?
WELL?
I THINK I GOTTA SAY YES?

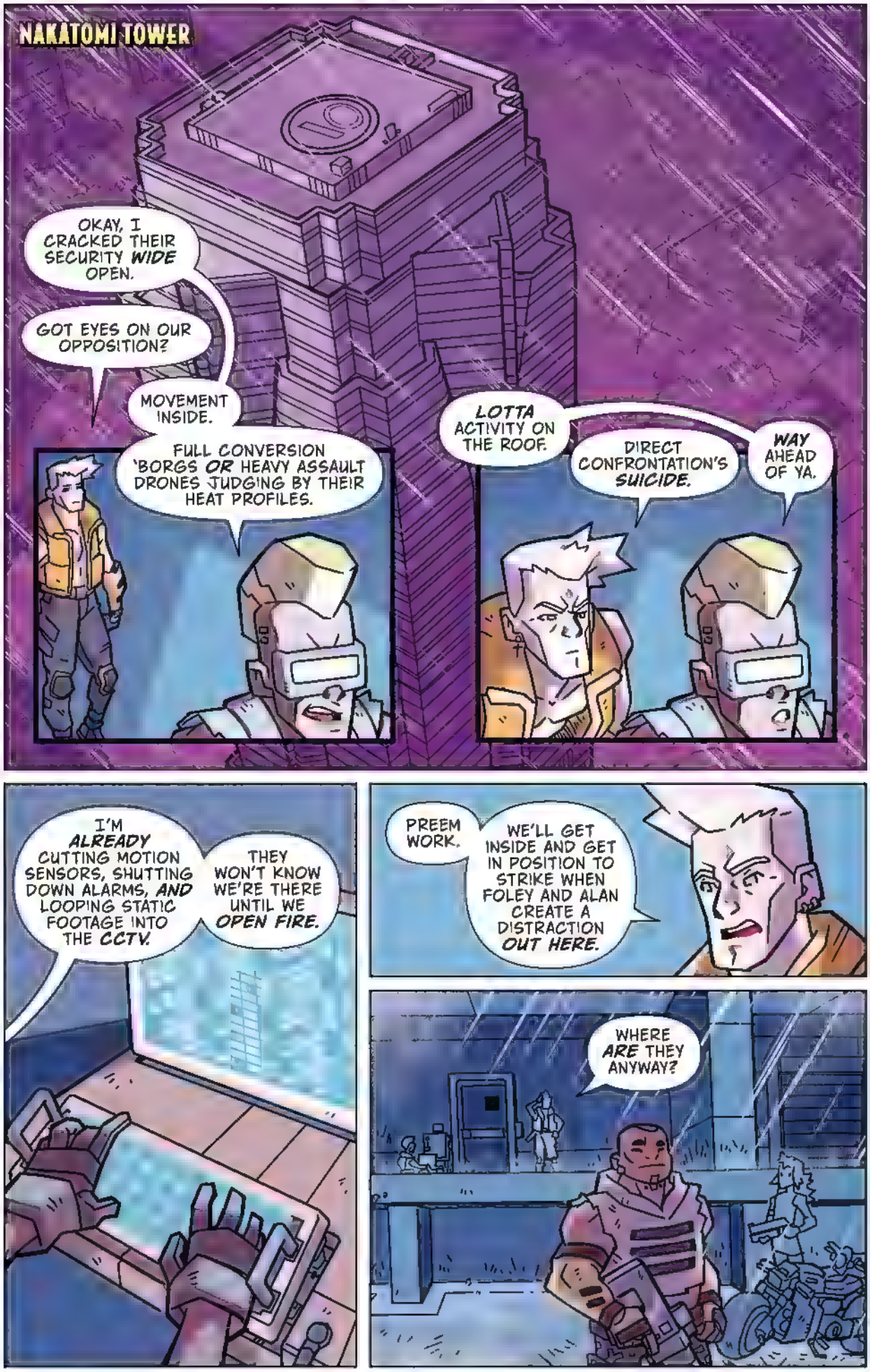
THE PROMETHEUS
NO HELM CONTROL
POSSIBLE REACTOR LEAK
SOME FLOODING
ON THE BRIGHT SIDE, IF ELEANORE IS THE KILLER, SHE'LL LIKELY GO DOWN WITH THE SHIP.
HOW IS THAT THE BRIGHT SIDE, WESTON?
WHEN WE'RE ON THE SAME SHIP!
SOMETIMES, MY DEAR, EVEN THE BRIGHT SIDE IS DIRE.


LIKE THE BRIGHT SIDE IS THAT DROWNING IS MUCH FASTER AND LESS PAINFUL THAN RADIATION POISONING.
WE'RE NOT DROWNING, ZEBOS.
AND WE'RE HEADING FOR THE REACTOR TO MAKE SURE IT DOESN'T MELT DOWN.
WHAT IF THE DOOR'S SEALED SHUT LIKE SO MANY OF THE REST?
IT WON'T BE, THIS WAS A NAVY VESSEL
MANUAL EMERGENCY OVERRIDE FOR THE REACTOR DOOR IS STANDARD.
WE JUST HAVE TO GET THERE FIRST.
BEFORE THE WATER, WELL, YOU KNOW.
NOT SURE I CARE FOR THE ODDS OF OUR SURVIVAL.

NO ONE IS DYING.
OTHER THAN STAFFORD, YOU MEAN.
AND ELEANORE.
YOU DON'T TRULY BELIEVE THAT, DO YOU?
POOR THING WILL NEVER OUTRUN RISING WATER IN HEELS.
THEY'RE RIGHT, ROBO.
YOU'VE A POOR RECORD OF SAVING LIVES THUS FAR.


FIRST OF ALL, STAFFORD DIED WHILE I WAS DEACTIVATED.
SECOND OF ALL, I THINK ONE OF YOU KILLED HIM.
WHICH IS WHY I'M KEEPING ALL OF YOU IN MY OPTICS.
THIRDLY, I THINK ELEANORE KNOWS WHO DID IT, AND THAT'S WHY SHE RAN OFF AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY.
I HOPE YOU KNOW THE MORE YOU MAKE THESE ALLEGATIONS THE MORE RIDICULOUS THEY SOUND.
THAT'S FINE.

TAKE A LEFT!
UH, THERE IS NO LEFT!
NEVERTHELESS.
WE'RE NEARLY THERE.


NAKATOMI TOWER
OKAY, I CRACKED THEIR SECURITY WIDE OPEN.
GOT EYES ON OUR OPPOSITION?
MOVEMENT INSIDE.
FULL CONVERSION 'BORGS OR HEAVY ASSAULT DRONES JUDGING BY THEIR HEAT PROFILES.
LOTTA ACTIVITY ON THE ROOF.
DIRECT CONFRONTATION'S SUICIDE.
WAY AHEAD OF YA.
I'M ALREADY CUTTING MOTION SENSORS, SHUTTING DOWN ALARMS, AND LOOPING STATIC FOOTAGE INTO THE CCTV.
THEY WON'T KNOW WE'RE THERE UNTIL WE OPEN FIRE.
PREEM WORK.
WE'LL GET INSIDE AND GET IN POSITION TO STRIKE WHEN FOLEY AND ALAN CREATE A DISTRACTION OUT HERE.
WHERE ARE THEY ANYWAY?

I'D GIVE THEIR ETA 'BOUT TWO SECONDS.
TOLD YA WE'D MAKE IT.
SMASH!!

THIS WAY!
ZWARK
BKOW
LOOK OUT!
KRASH
BKOOOUM
GET DOWN!
OR WE COULD DO THE SUICIDAL FRONTAL ASSAULT.
BRAKKA DAKKA
ZWARK ZAAAK
BKOUUUM

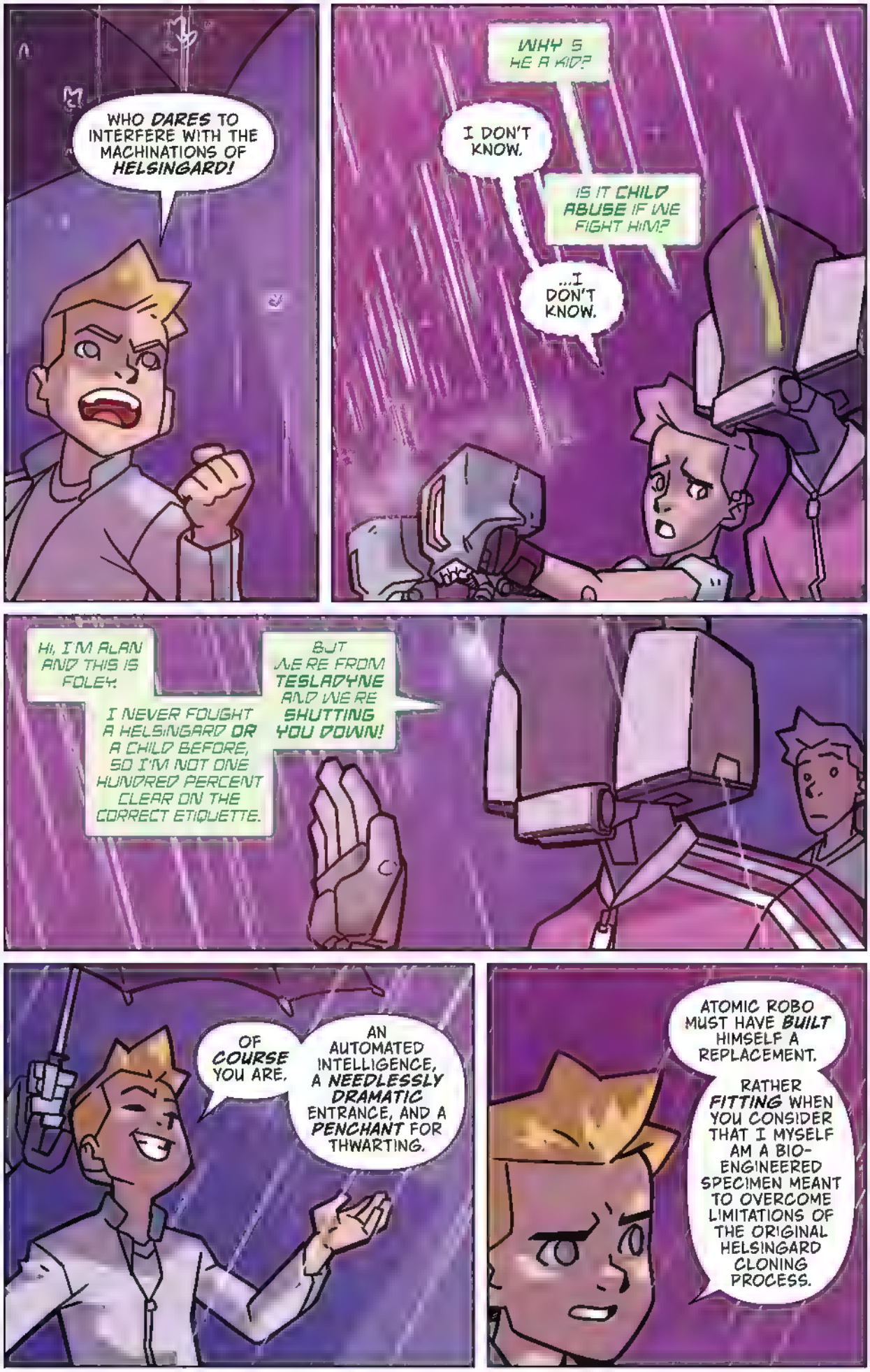
WHY DO I HEAR EXPLOSIONS...

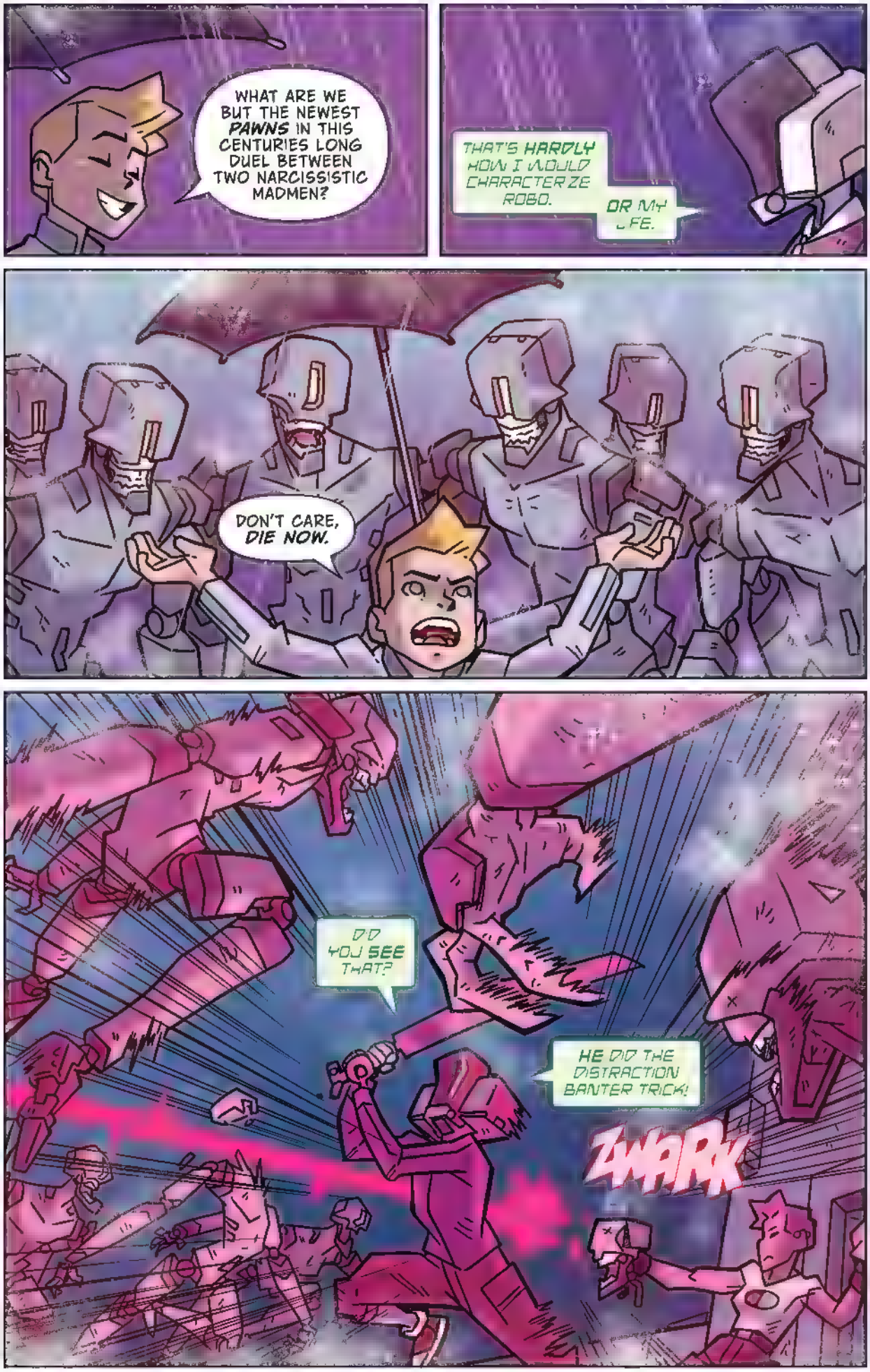
...WHEN THE SECURITY MONITORS INDICATE A *DISTINCT ABSENCE* OF UNSCHEDULED EXOTHERMIC PHENOMENA!

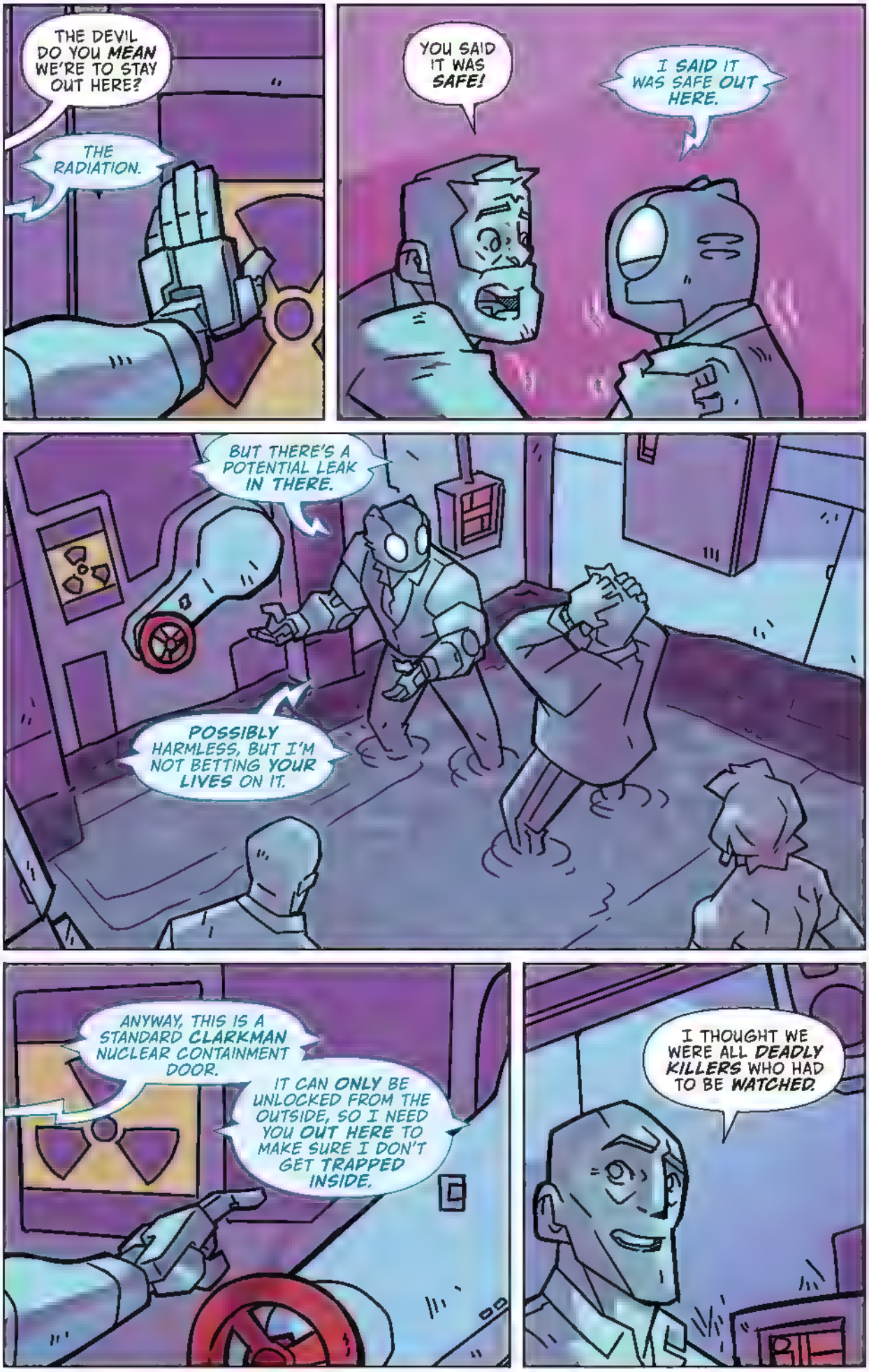
AND, MOREOVER, *WHY* AM I QUERYING AN INTELLECTUALLY *INERT* AUTOMATON?

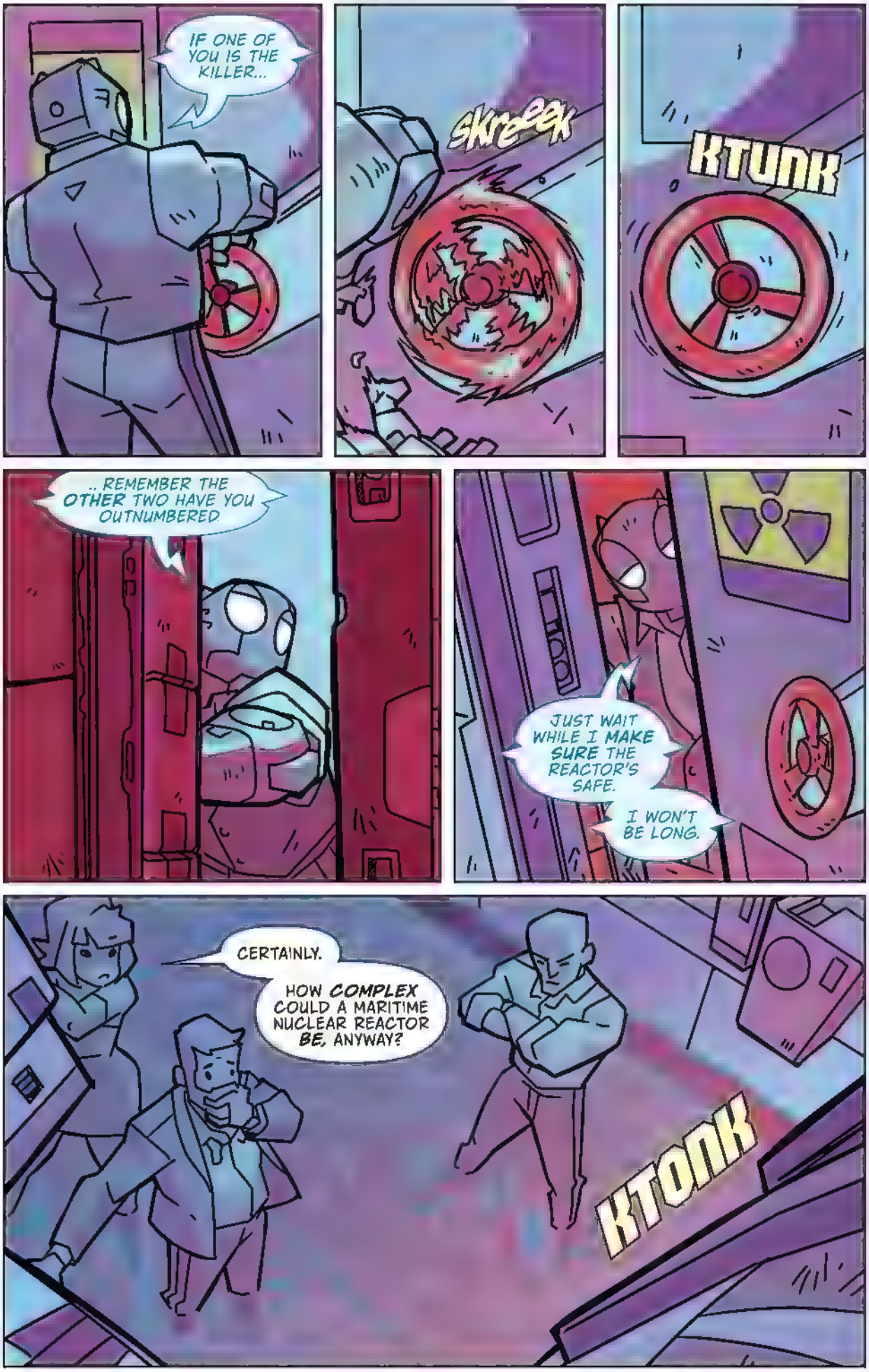
FWBAM

SHOW'S OVER!


WHO DARES TO INTERFERE WITH THE MACHINATIONS OF HELSINGARD!
WHY S HE A KID?
I DON'T KNOW.
IS IT CHILD ABUSE IF WE FIGHT HIM?
...I DON'T KNOW.
HI, I'M ALAN AND THIS IS FOLEY.
I NEVER FOUGHT A HELSINGARD OR A CHILD BEFORE, SO I'M NOT ONE HUNDRED PERCENT CLEAR ON THE CORRECT ETIQUETTE.
BUT WE RE FROM TESLADYNE AND WE RE SHUTTING YOU DOWN!
OF COURSE YOU ARE.
AN AUTOMATED INTELLIGENCE, A NEEDLESSLY DRAMATIC ENTRANCE, AND A PENCHANT FOR THWARTING.
ATOMIC ROBO MUST HAVE BUILT HIMSELF A REPLACEMENT.
RATHER FITTING WHEN YOU CONSIDER THAT I MYSELF AM A BIO-ENGINEERED SPECIMEN MEANT TO OVERCOME LIMITATIONS OF THE ORIGINAL HELSINGARD CLONING PROCESS.


WHAT ARE WE BUT THE NEWEST PAWNS IN THIS CENTURIES LONG DUEL BETWEEN TWO NARCISSISTIC MADMEN?
THAT'S HARDLY HOW I WOULD CHARACTERIZE ROBO.
OR MY LIFE.
DON'T CARE, DIE NOW.
DO YOU SEE THAT?
HE DID THE DISTRACTION BANTER TRICK!
ZWARK


THE DEVIL DO YOU MEAN WE'RE TO STAY OUT HERE?
THE RADIATION.
YOU SAID IT WAS SAFE!
I SAID IT WAS SAFE OUT HERE.
BUT THERE'S A POTENTIAL LEAK IN THERE.
POSSIBLY HARMLESS, BUT I'M NOT BETTING YOUR LIVES ON IT.
ANYWAY, THIS IS A STANDARD CLARKMAN NUCLEAR CONTAINMENT DOOR.
IT CAN ONLY BE UNLOCKED FROM THE OUTSIDE, SO I NEED YOU OUT HERE TO MAKE SURE I DON'T GET TRAPPED INSIDE.
I THOUGHT WE WERE ALL DEADLY KILLERS WHO HAD TO BE WATCHED.


IF ONE OF YOU IS THE KILLER...
SKREEEK
KTUNK
.. REMEMBER THE OTHER TWO HAVE YOU OUTNUMBERED
JUST WAIT WHILE I MAKE SURE THE REACTOR'S SAFE.
I WON'T BE LONG.
CERTAINLY.
HOW COMPLEX COULD A MARITIME NUCLEAR REACTOR BE, ANYWAY?
KTONK

LOCK

kashunk

HEY.

HEY!

WE DON'T *WANT* TO DO THIS, ROBO.

TRULY.

BUT ELEANORE WAS GOING TO *TANK* OUR STOCK PRICES!

GIVING OUR STOCK-HOLDERS *CAUSE TO SUE.*

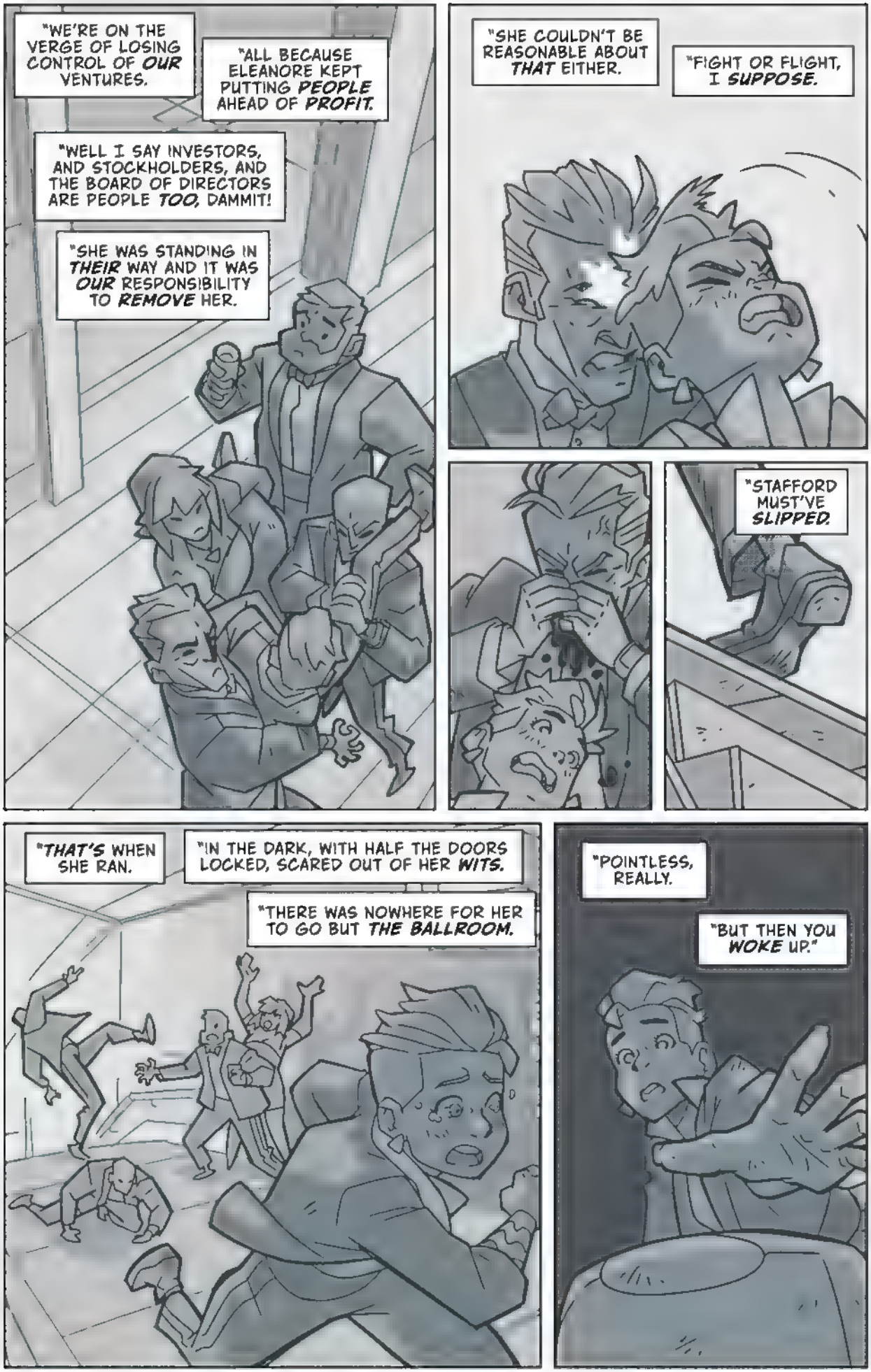
AND OUR BOARDS!

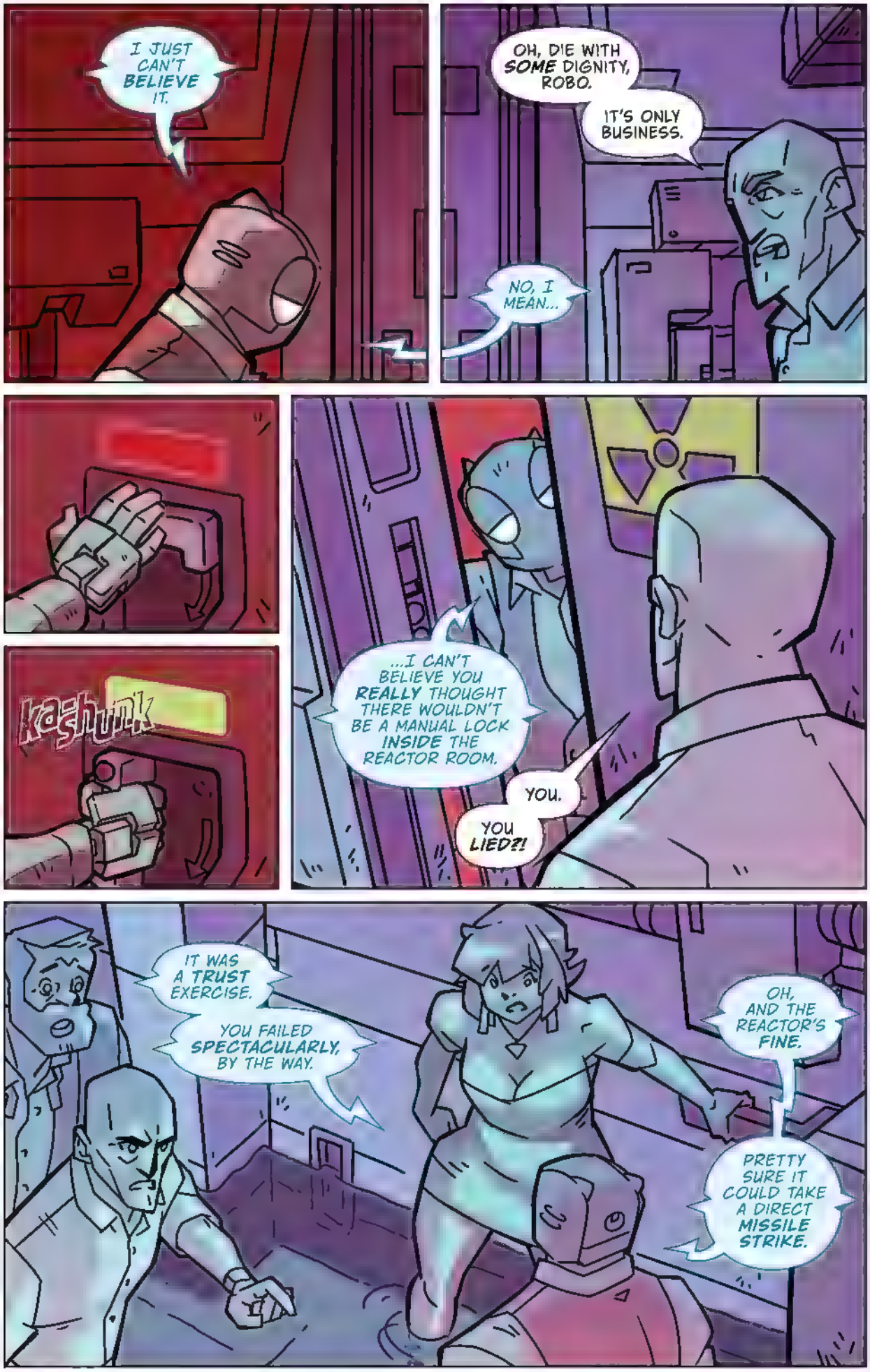
YOU CAN SEE THAT *WON'T* DO.

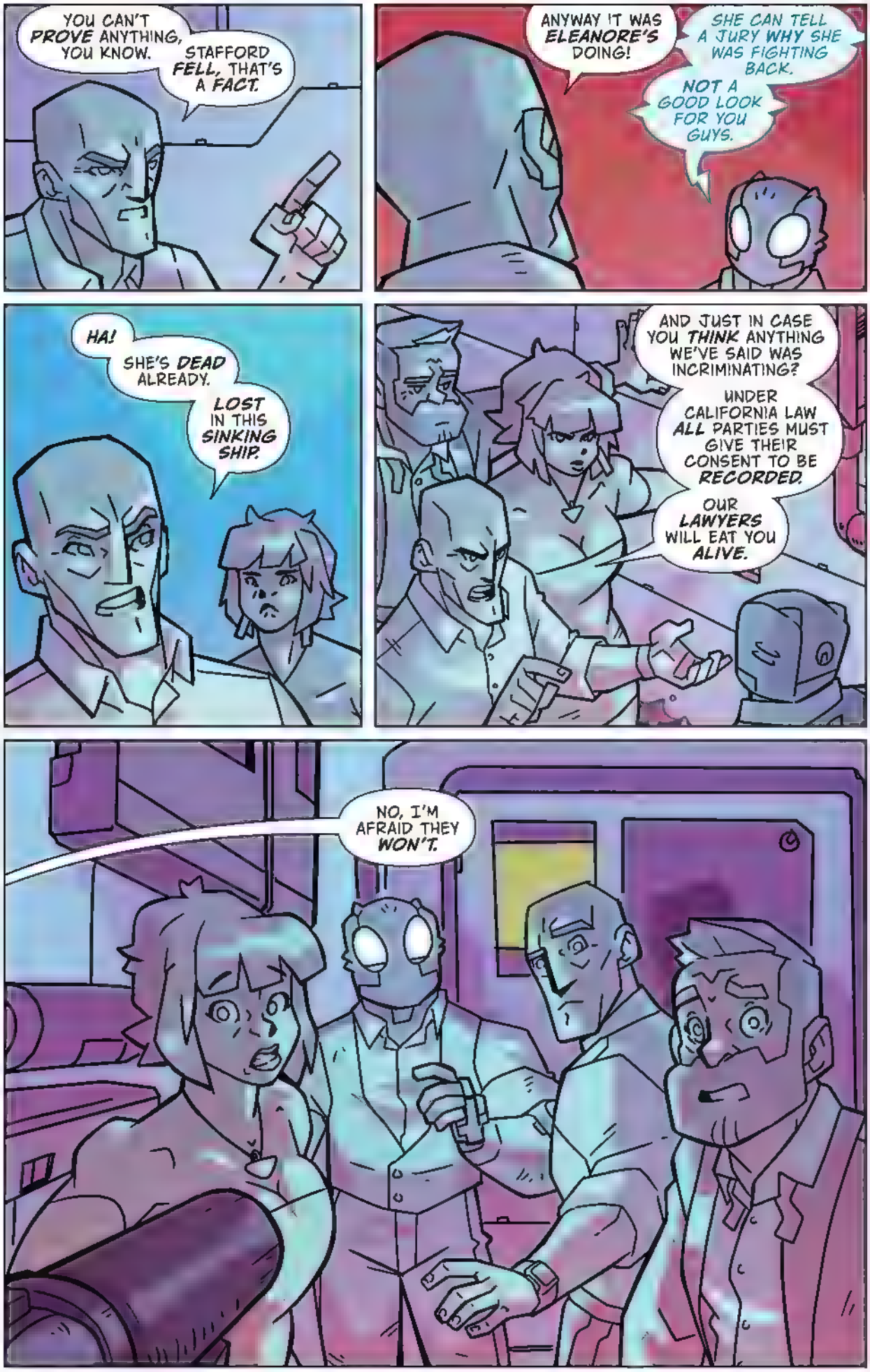
NO, BEST TO SINK THE SHIP WITH ELEANORE *AND* THE TRUTH I'M AFRAID YOU'RE NOTHING BUT COLLATERAL DAMAGE

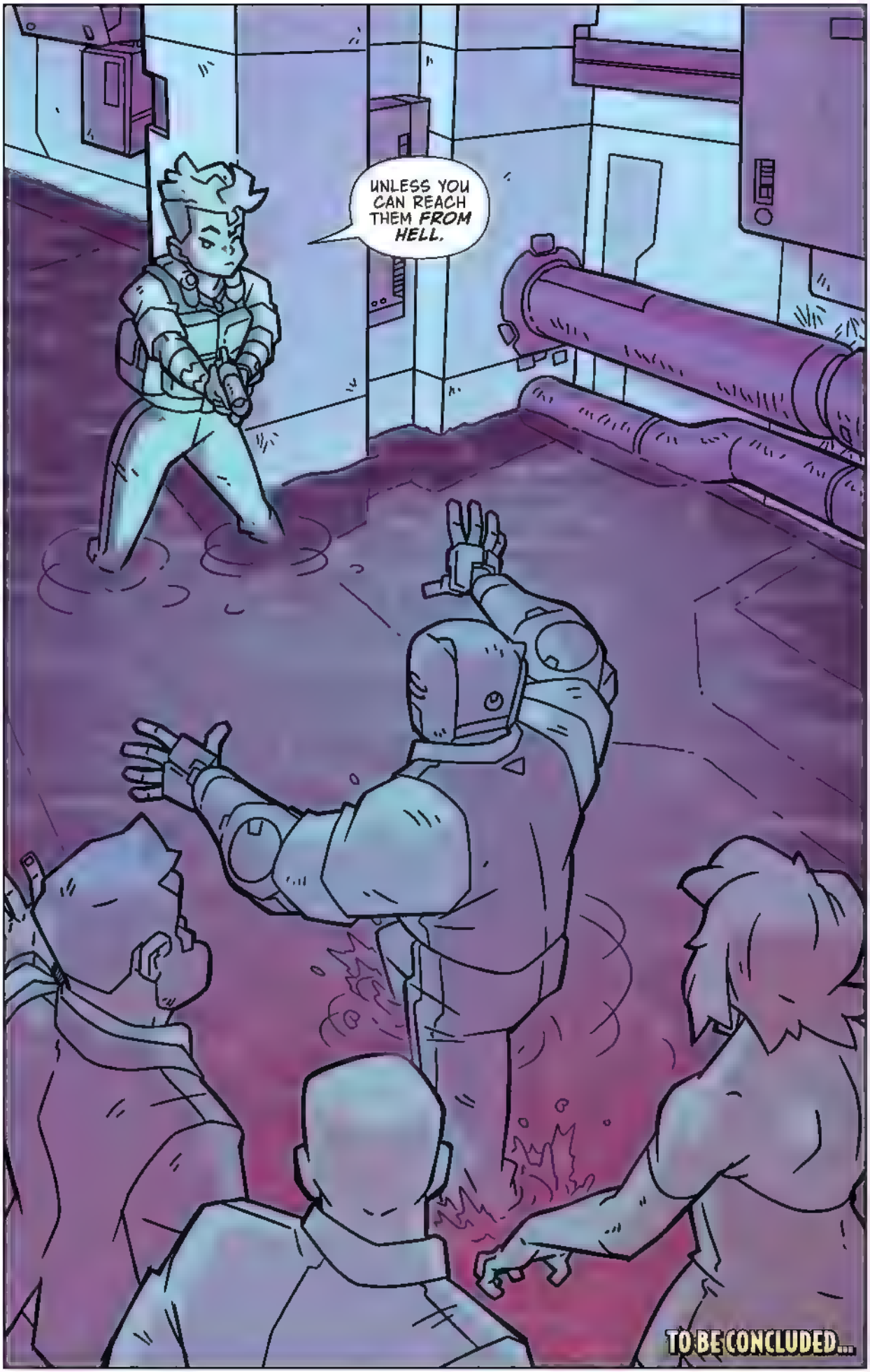
[redacted]

I DON'T UNDERSTAND!
"WE THOUGHT YOU DIED.
"WE WERE TRAPPED, IN DARKNESS, FOR HOURS.
"TENSIONS ROSE, WE ARGUED.
"WE DIDN'T WANT TO KILL ELEANORE.
"BUT SHE WOULDN'T SEE REASON.
"ALL WE WANTED WAS OUR FAIR SHARE OF HER PALLADIUM MINE.
"WE ONLY NEEDED A FEW DOLLARS PER GRAM.
"BUT SHE KEPT INSISTING THE WORKERS OWNED IT.
"THAT WOULDN'T DO."
WE DECIDED SHE WOULD "FALL" OVERBOARD.
YOU WERE GOING TO KILL HER OVER A FEW DOLLARS?
PER GRAM, ROBO.
WITH LITERAL TONS OF THE STUFF AT STAKE.


"WE'RE ON THE VERGE OF LOSING CONTROL OF *OUR* VENTURES.
"ALL BECAUSE ELEANORE KEPT PUTTING *PEOPLE* AHEAD OF *PROFIT.*
"WELL I SAY INVESTORS, AND STOCKHOLDERS, AND THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ARE PEOPLE *TOO,* DAMMIT!
"SHE WAS STANDING IN *THEIR* WAY AND IT WAS *OUR* RESPONSIBILITY TO *REMOVE* HER.
"SHE COULDN'T BE REASONABLE ABOUT *THAT* EITHER.
"FIGHT OR FLIGHT, I *SUPPOSE.*
"STAFFORD MUST'VE *SLIPPED.*
"*THAT'S* WHEN SHE RAN.
"IN THE DARK, WITH HALF THE DOORS LOCKED, SCARED OUT OF HER *WITS.*
"THERE WAS NOWHERE FOR HER TO GO BUT *THE BALLROOM.*
"POINTLESS, REALLY.
"BUT THEN YOU *WOKE* UP."


I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE IT.
OH, DIE WITH SOME DIGNITY, ROBO.
IT'S ONLY BUSINESS.
NO, I MEAN...
kashunk
...I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU REALLY THOUGHT THERE WOULDN'T BE A MANUAL LOCK INSIDE THE REACTOR ROOM.
YOU.
YOU LIED?!
IT WAS A TRUST EXERCISE.
YOU FAILED SPECTACULARLY, BY THE WAY.
OH, AND THE REACTOR'S FINE.
PRETTY SURE IT COULD TAKE A DIRECT MISSILE STRIKE.


YOU CAN'T PROVE ANYTHING, YOU KNOW.
STAFFORD FELL, THAT'S A FACT.
ANYWAY IT WAS ELEANORE'S DOING!
SHE CAN TELL A JURY WHY SHE WAS FIGHTING BACK.
NOT A GOOD LOOK FOR YOU GUYS.
HA!
SHE'S DEAD ALREADY.
LOST IN THIS SINKING SHIP.
AND JUST IN CASE YOU THINK ANYTHING WE'VE SAID WAS INCRIMINATING?
UNDER CALIFORNIA LAW ALL PARTIES MUST GIVE THEIR CONSENT TO BE RECORDED.
OUR LAWYERS WILL EAT YOU ALIVE.
NO, I'M AFRAID THEY WON'T.


UNLESS YOU CAN REACH THEM *FROM HELL.*
TO BE CONCLUDED...

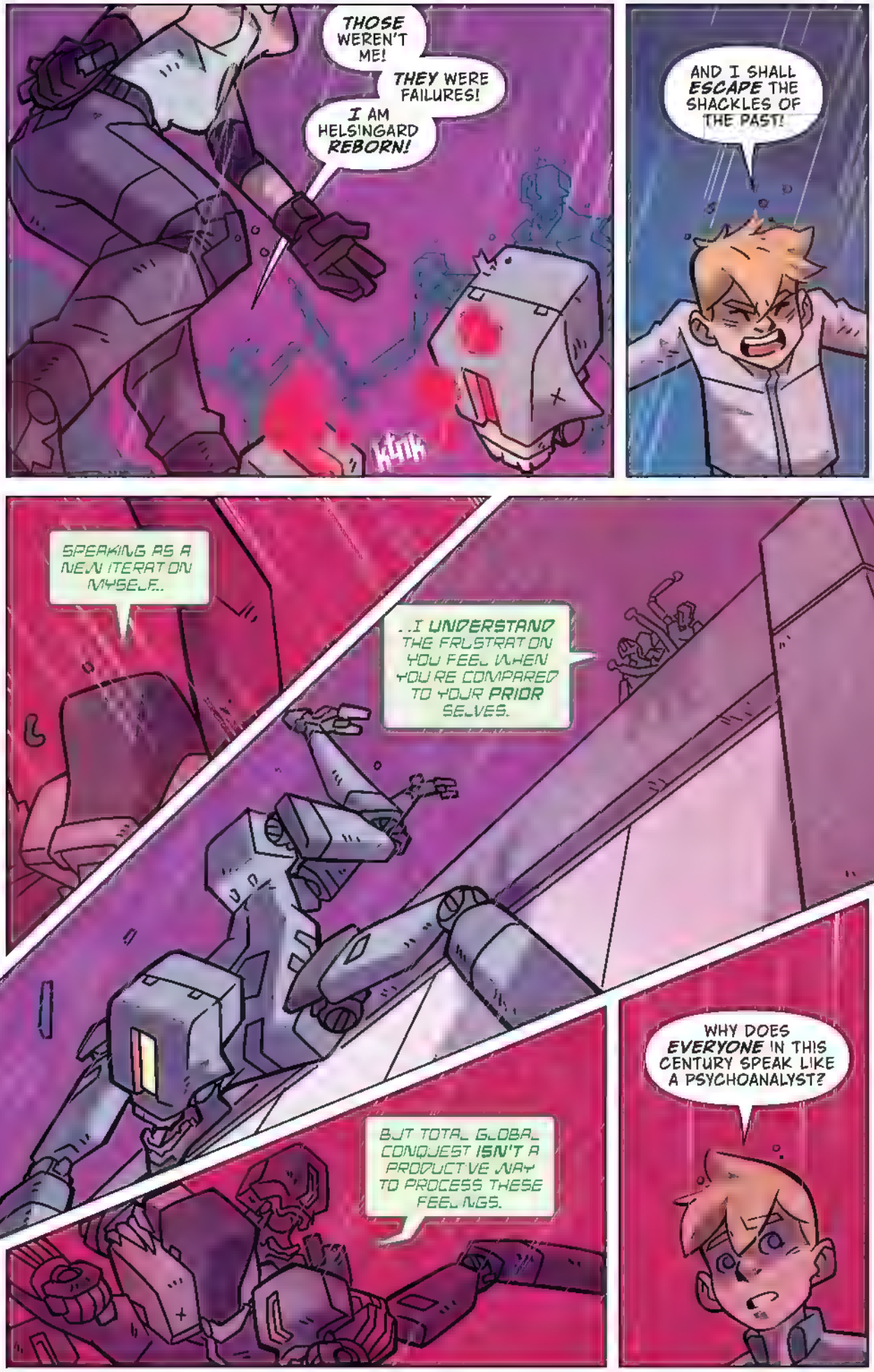
ATOMIC ROBO

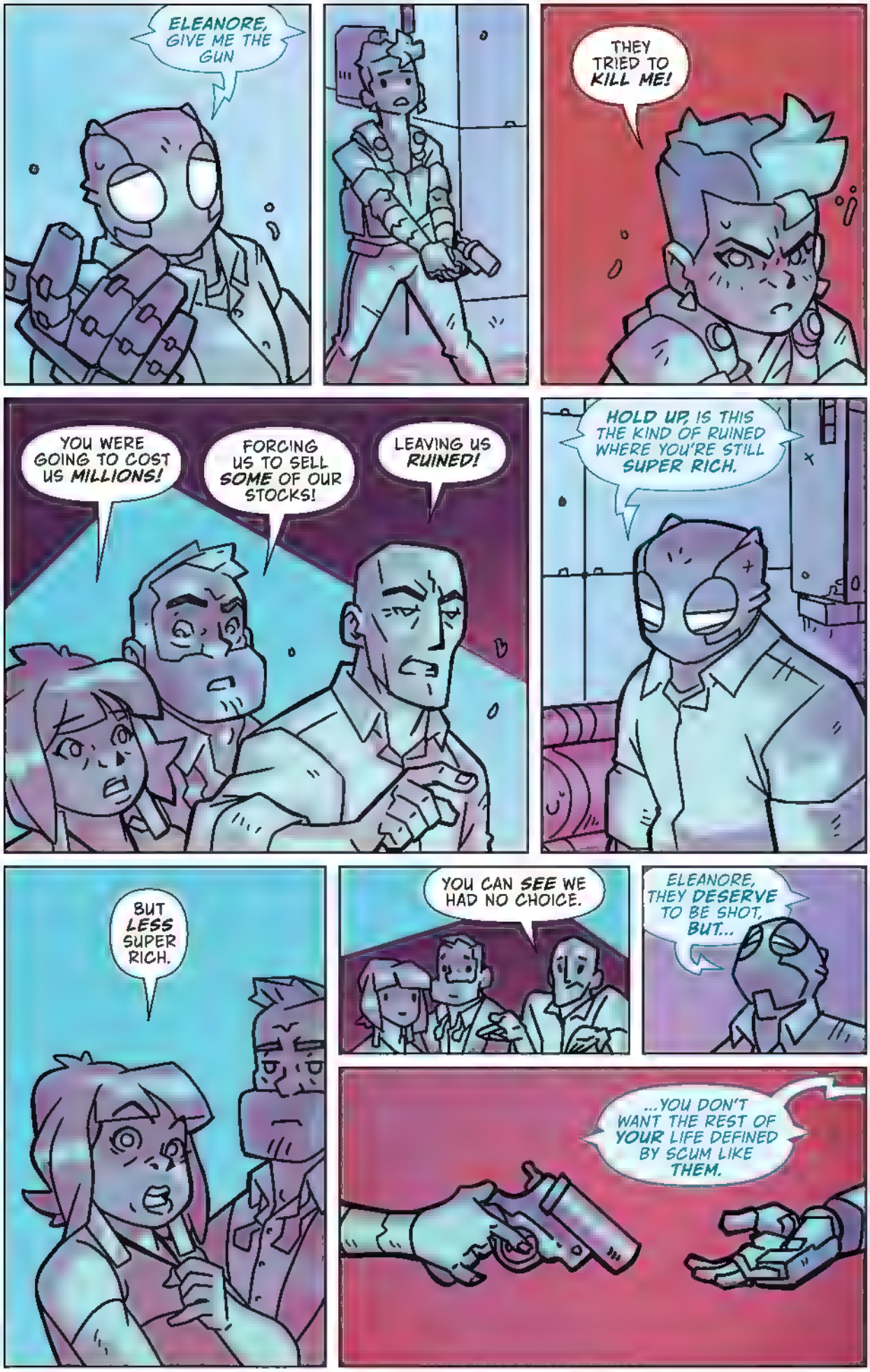
THE WORLD'S GREATEST SCIENCE ADVENTURE MAGAZINE!

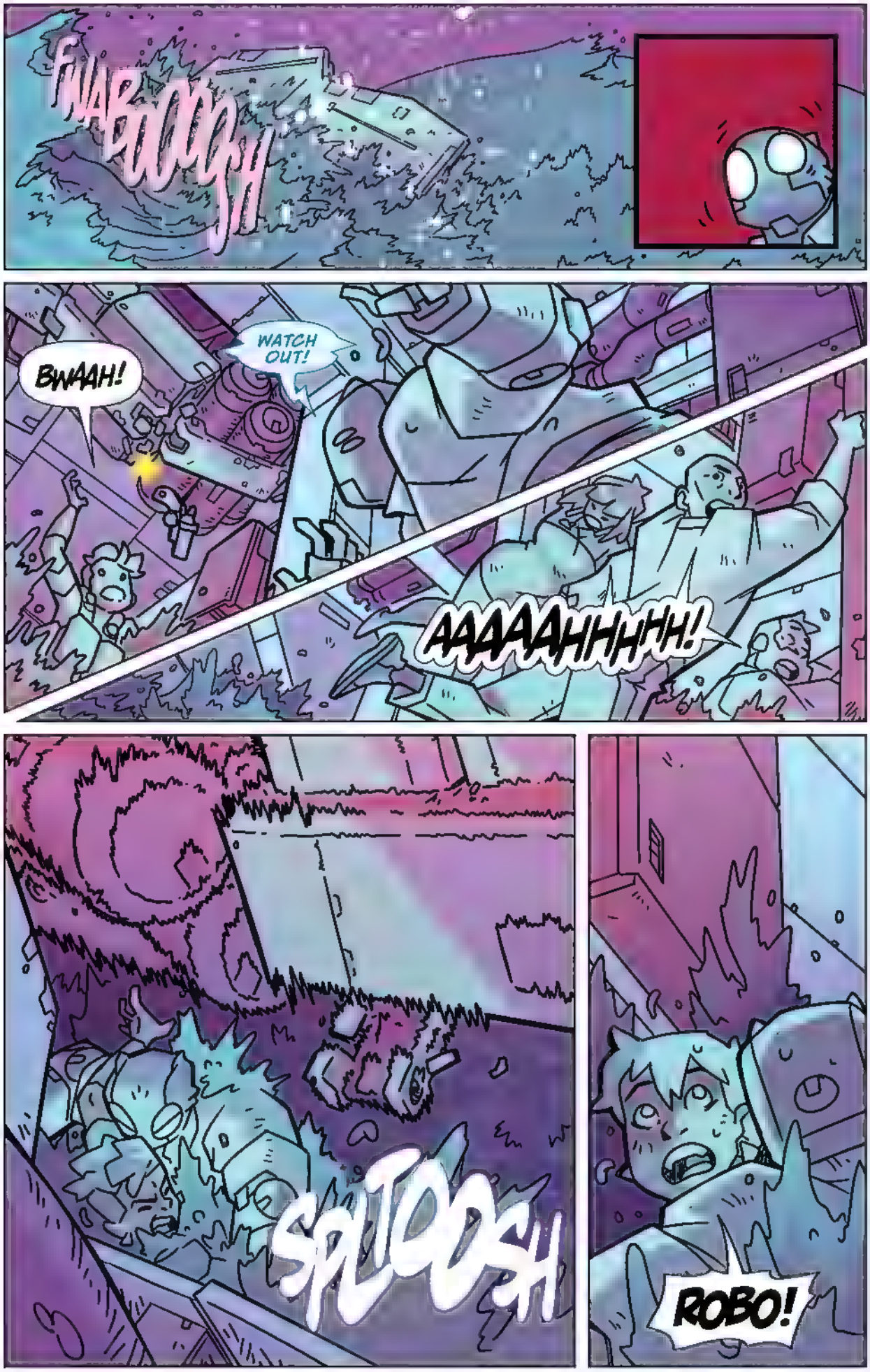
Friday Night Fire Fight

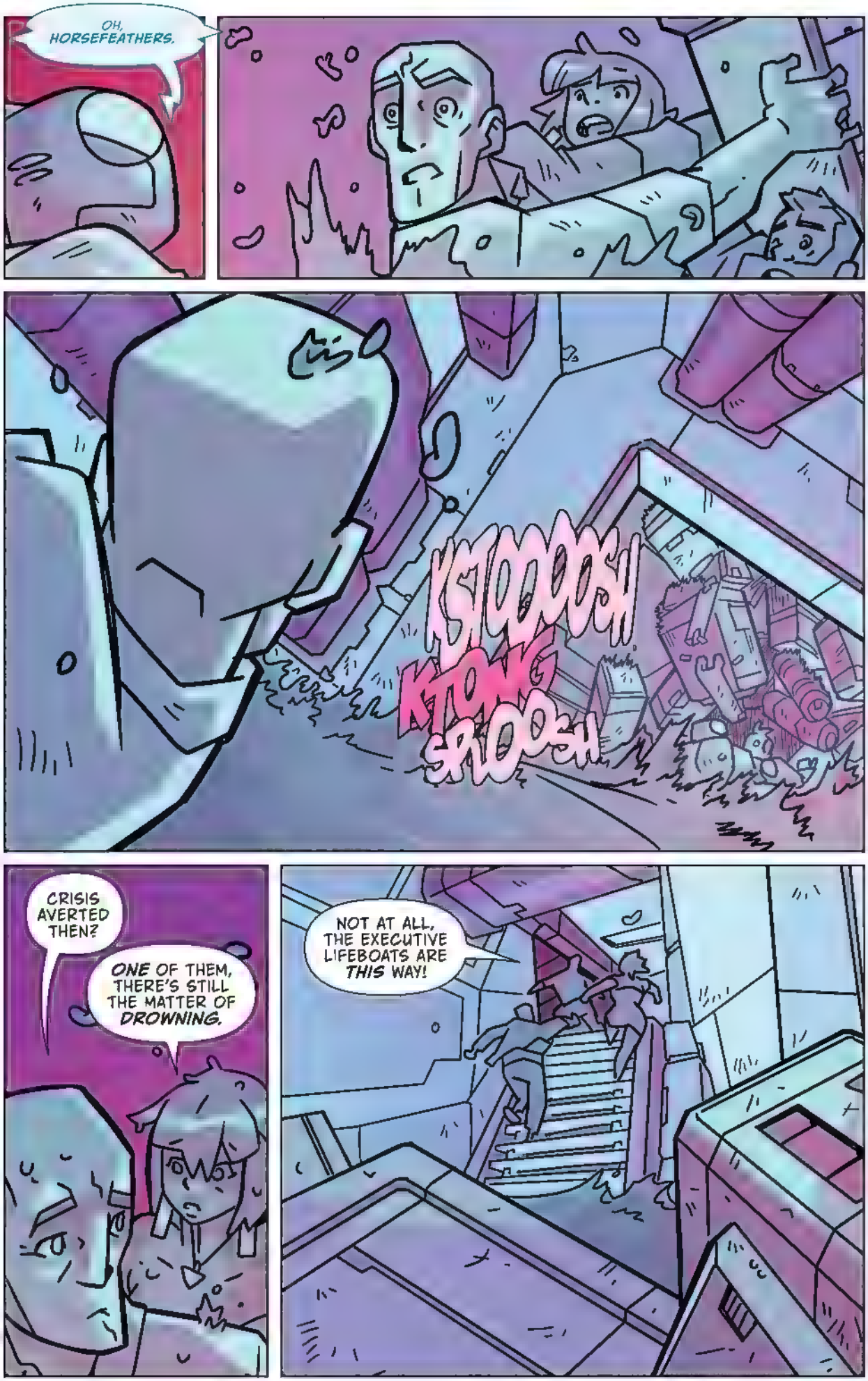
Brian Clevinger / Scott Wegener
Tess Stone / Jeff Powell / Lee Black

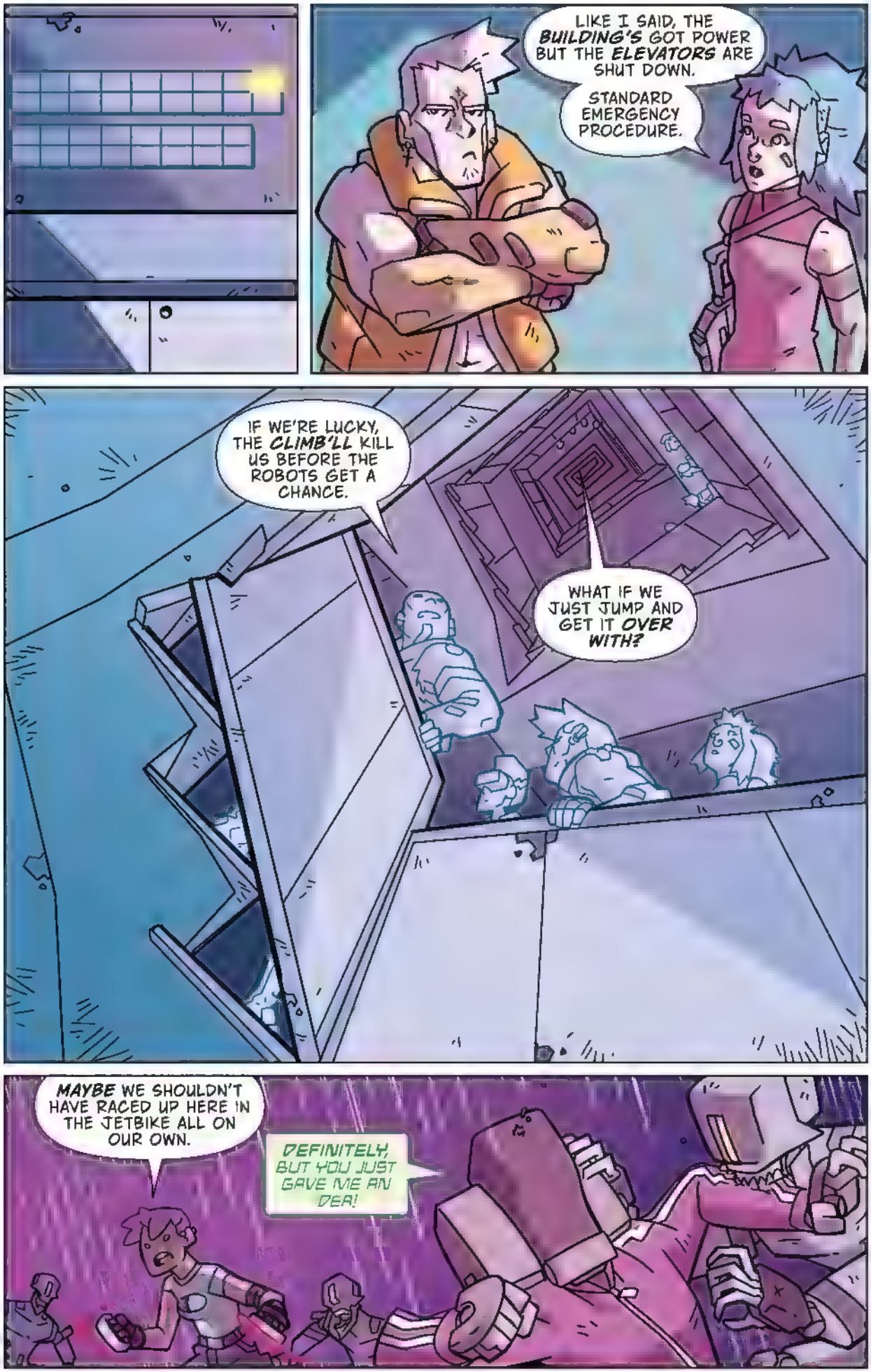
MILLIONS WILL DIE IN THE COMING DAYS AS THE FOURTH LARGEST ECONOMY IN THE WORLD COLLAPSES.
KZARK
ZARK
I WILL DO THIS AGAIN AND AGAIN ALL OVER THE WORLD UNTIL MY DEMANDS ARE MET.
WE'VE HEARD IT.
KWONG
YOU HAVE MADE AT LEAST SIX ATTEMPTS AT WEATHER CONTROL WORLD DOMINATION SCHEMES ACROSS VARIOUS INCARNATIONS.
OH DARN IT.
POINT IS, IF IT WAS EVER GONNA WORK, IT ALREADY WOULD HAVE!
CLK CLK
SHIT


THOSE WEREN'T ME!
THEY WERE FAILURES!
I AM HELSINGARD REBORN!
AND I SHALL ESCAPE THE SHACKLES OF THE PAST!
SPEAKING AS A NEW ITERATION MYSELF...
...I UNDERSTAND THE FRUSTRATION YOU FEEL WHEN YOU'RE COMPARED TO YOUR PRIOR SELVES.
BUT TOTAL GLOBAL CONQUEST ISN'T A PRODUCTIVE WAY TO PROCESS THESE FEELINGS.
WHY DOES EVERYONE IN THIS CENTURY SPEAK LIKE A PSYCHOANALYST?


ELEANORE, GIVE ME THE GUN
THEY TRIED TO KILL ME!
YOU WERE GOING TO COST US MILLIONS!
FORCING US TO SELL SOME OF OUR STOCKS!
LEAVING US RUINED!
HOLD UP, IS THIS THE KIND OF RUINED WHERE YOU'RE STILL SUPER RICH.
BUT LESS SUPER RICH.
YOU CAN SEE WE HAD NO CHOICE.
ELEANORE, THEY DESERVE TO BE SHOT, BUT...
...YOU DON'T WANT THE REST OF YOUR LIFE DEFINED BY SCUM LIKE THEM.

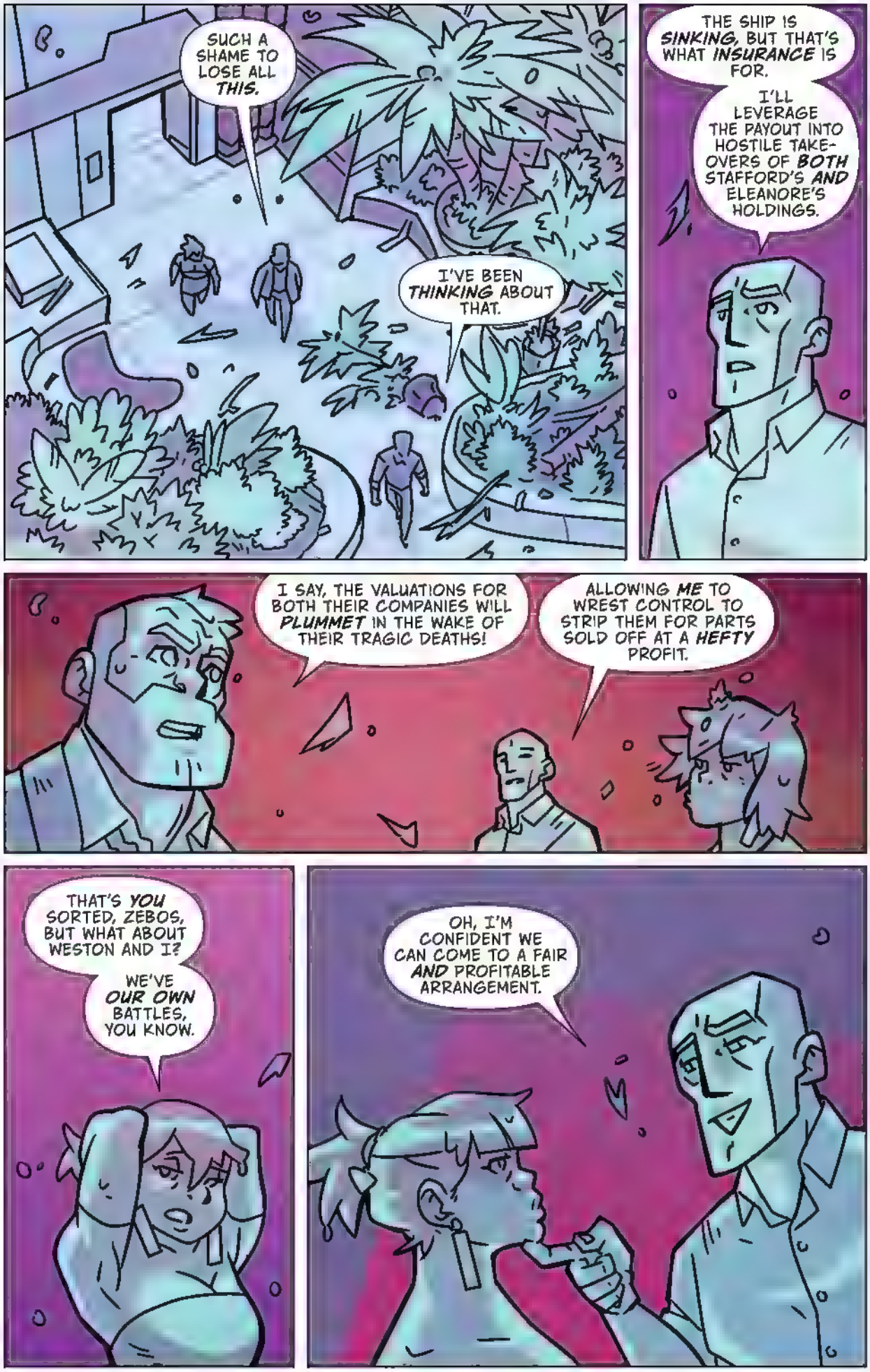

FWABOOOSH
BWAAH!
WATCH OUT!
AAAAAHHHHH!
SPLOOSH
ROBO!

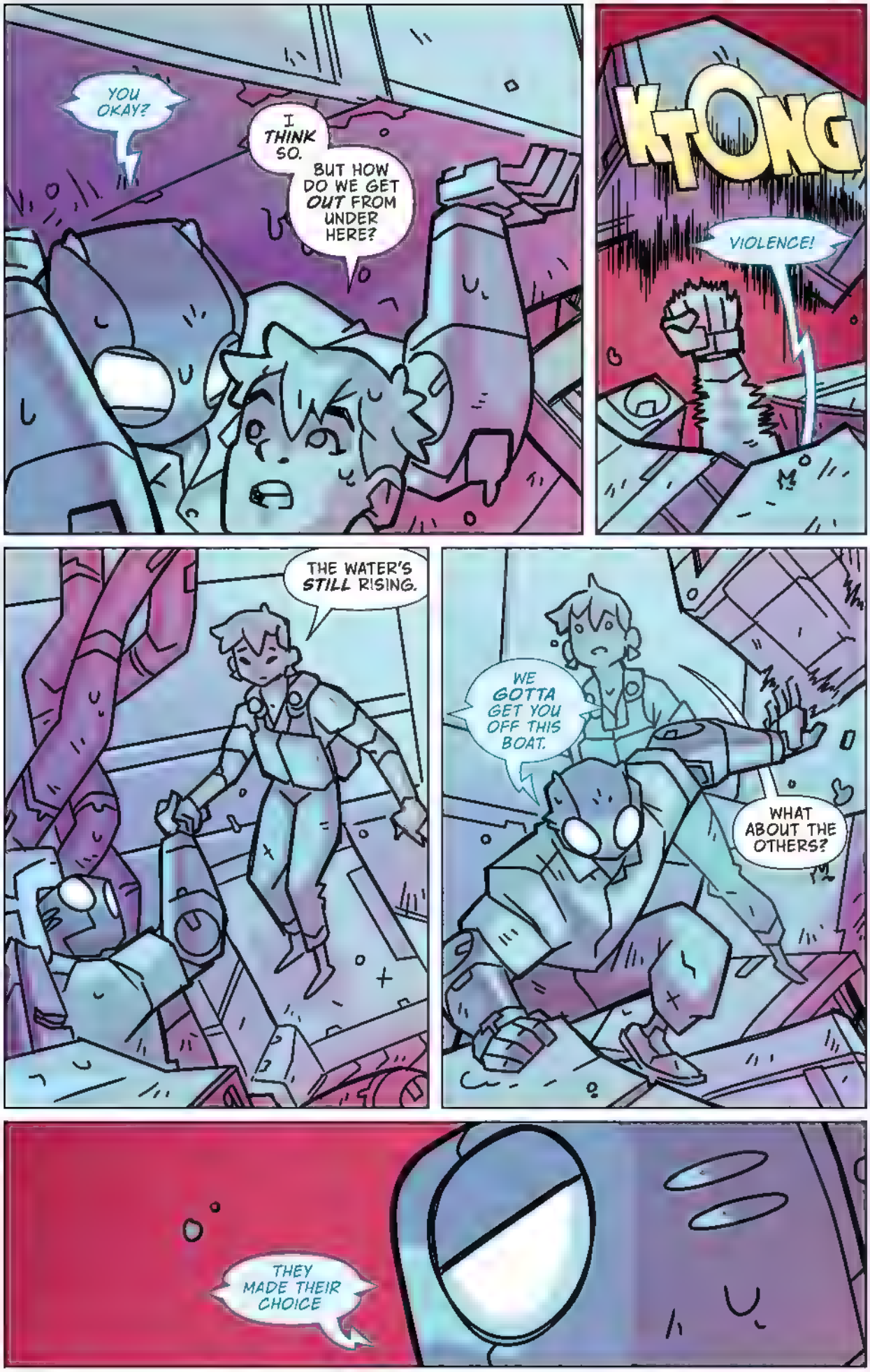

OH, HORSEFEATHERS.
KSLOOOSH
KTONG
SPLOOSH
CRISIS AVERTED THEN?
ONE OF THEM, THERE'S STILL THE MATTER OF DROWNING.
NOT AT ALL, THE EXECUTIVE LIFEBOATS ARE THIS WAY!


LIKE I SAID, THE BUILDING'S GOT POWER BUT THE ELEVATORS ARE SHUT DOWN.
STANDARD EMERGENCY PROCEDURE.
IF WE'RE LUCKY, THE CLIMB'LL KILL US BEFORE THE ROBOTS GET A CHANCE.
WHAT IF WE JUST JUMP AND GET IT OVER WITH?
MAYBE WE SHOULDN'T HAVE RACED UP HERE IN THE JETBIKE ALL ON OUR OWN.
DEFINITELY, BUT YOU JUST GAVE ME AN IDEA!

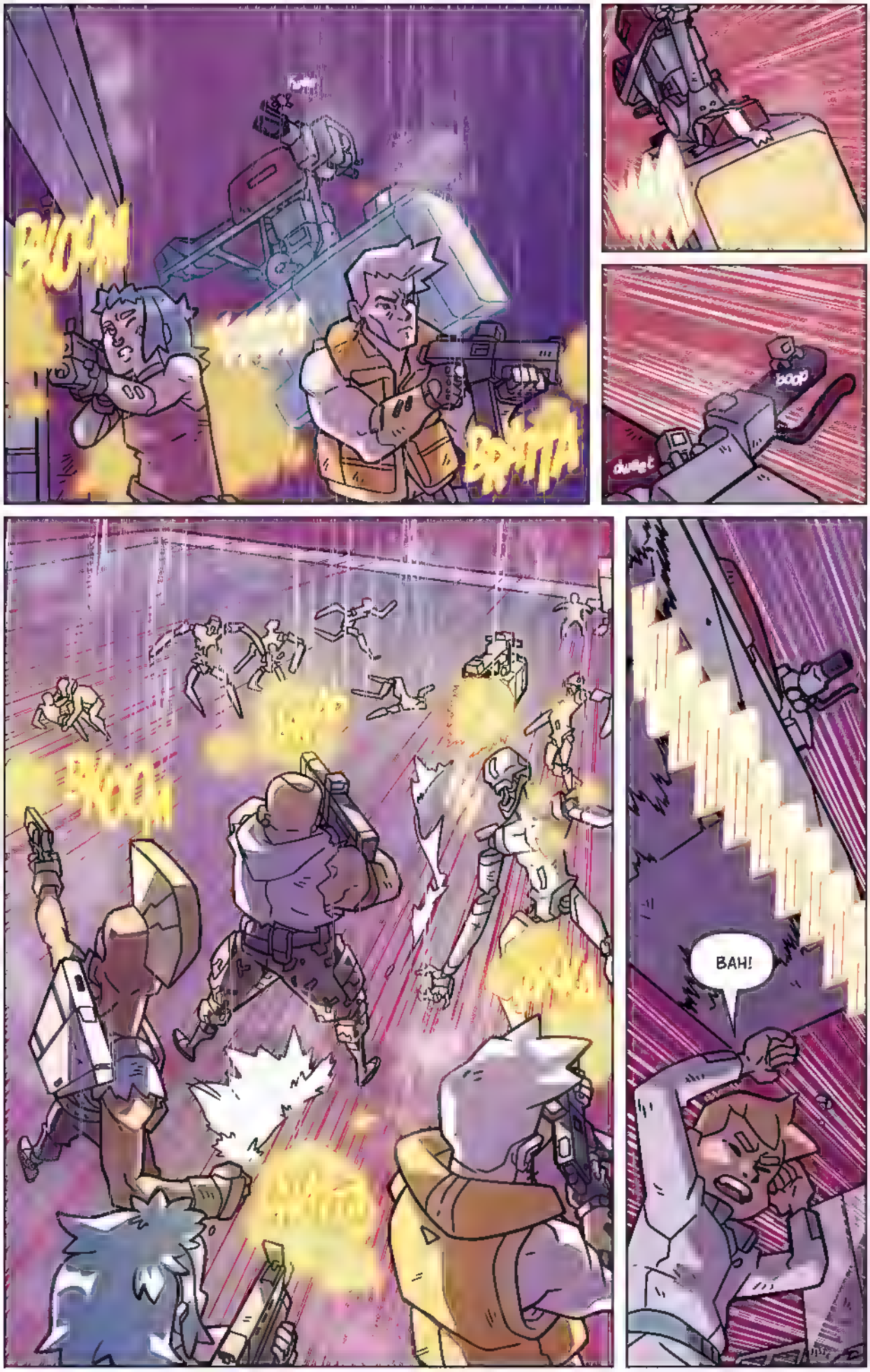
MEANWHILE...
ELEVATOR MASTER CONTROL
THAT IDEA OF YOURS *WORKIN'* YET?
ALMOST DONE.
=HUFF=
GONNA BE SICK...
GOTTA BE EASIER WAYS TO DIE...

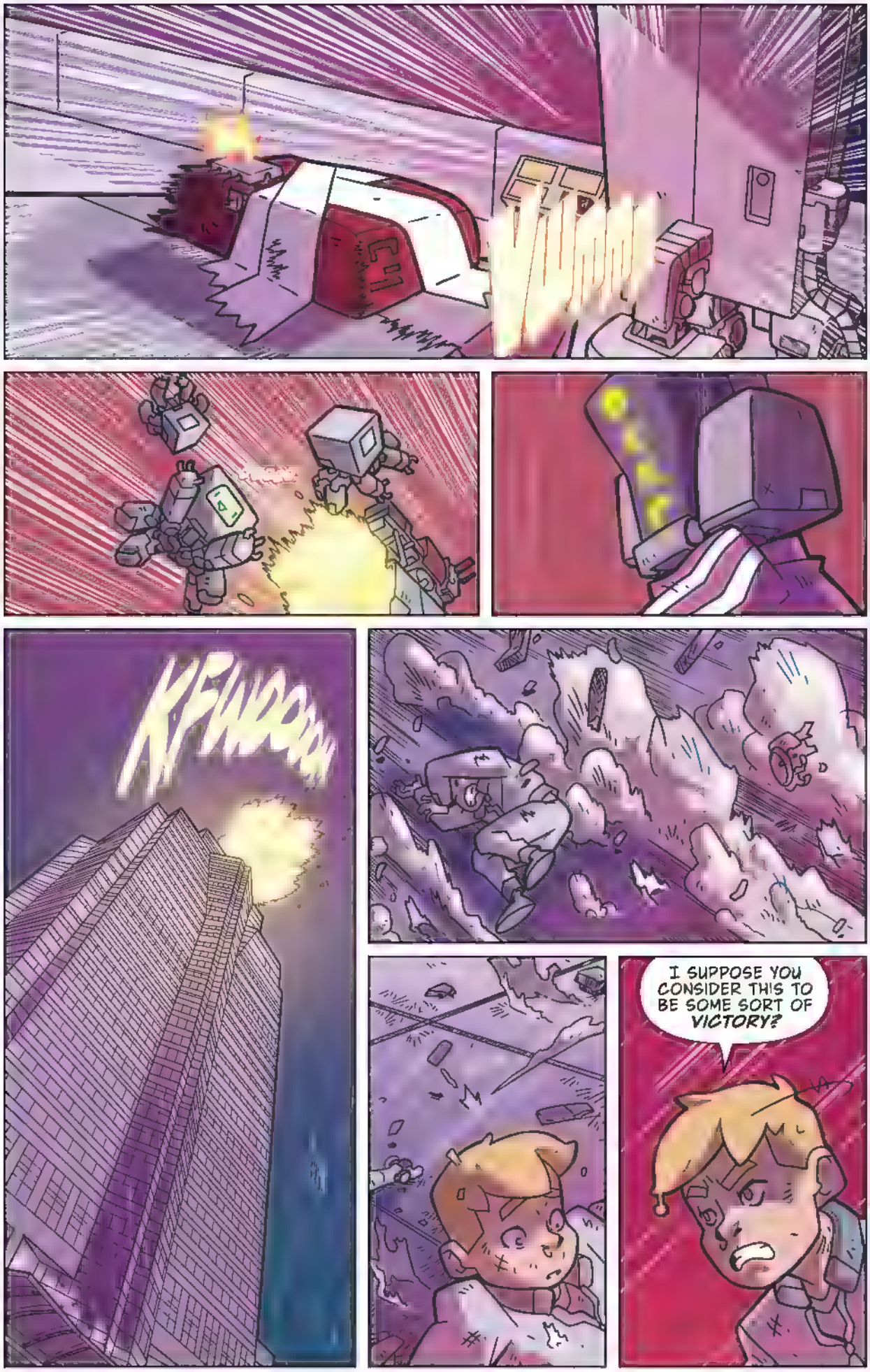
SURELY YOU REALIZE YOU'VE LOST.
THE REIGN OF HELSINGARD HAS ALREADY BEGUN.
WE ARE MERELY WAITING FOR THE PAPERWORK TO BE SIGNED.
WE MADE IT
ROOF
AUTHORIZED ACCESS ONLY
MY HELSINBORGS ARE LEGION AND MY VICTORY IS INEVITABLE!
WHAM
BA-DING DING
WAIT, THE ELEVATORS WORK?!
BETTER QUESTION--IS THAT C4?


SUCH A SHAME TO LOSE ALL *THIS.*
I'VE BEEN *THINKING* ABOUT THAT.
THE SHIP IS *SINKING,* BUT THAT'S WHAT *INSURANCE* IS FOR.
I'LL LEVERAGE THE PAYOUT INTO HOSTILE TAKE-OVERS OF *BOTH* STAFFORD'S *AND* ELEANORE'S HOLDINGS.
I SAY, THE VALUATIONS FOR BOTH THEIR COMPANIES WILL *PLUMMET* IN THE WAKE OF THEIR TRAGIC DEATHS!
ALLOWING *ME* TO WREST CONTROL TO STRIP THEM FOR PARTS SOLD OFF AT A *HEFTY* PROFIT.
THAT'S *YOU* SORTED, ZEBOS, BUT WHAT ABOUT WESTON AND I?
WE'VE *OUR OWN* BATTLES, YOU KNOW.
OH, I'M CONFIDENT WE CAN COME TO A FAIR *AND* PROFITABLE ARRANGEMENT.

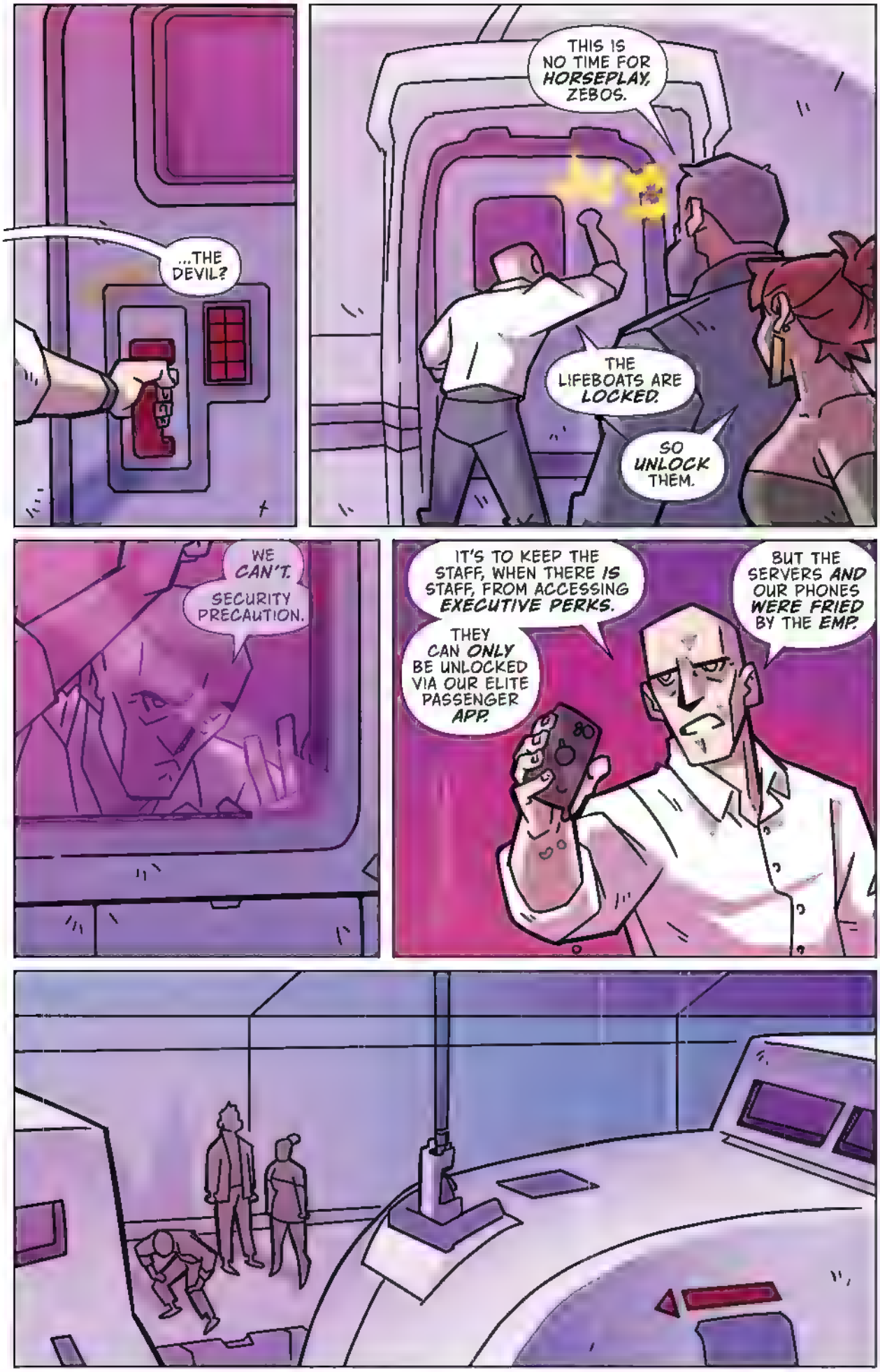

YOU OKAY?
I THINK SO.
BUT HOW DO WE GET OUT FROM UNDER HERE?
KTONG
VIOLENCE!
THE WATER'S STILL RISING.
WE GOTTA GET YOU OFF THIS BOAT.
WHAT ABOUT THE OTHERS?
THEY MADE THEIR CHOICE

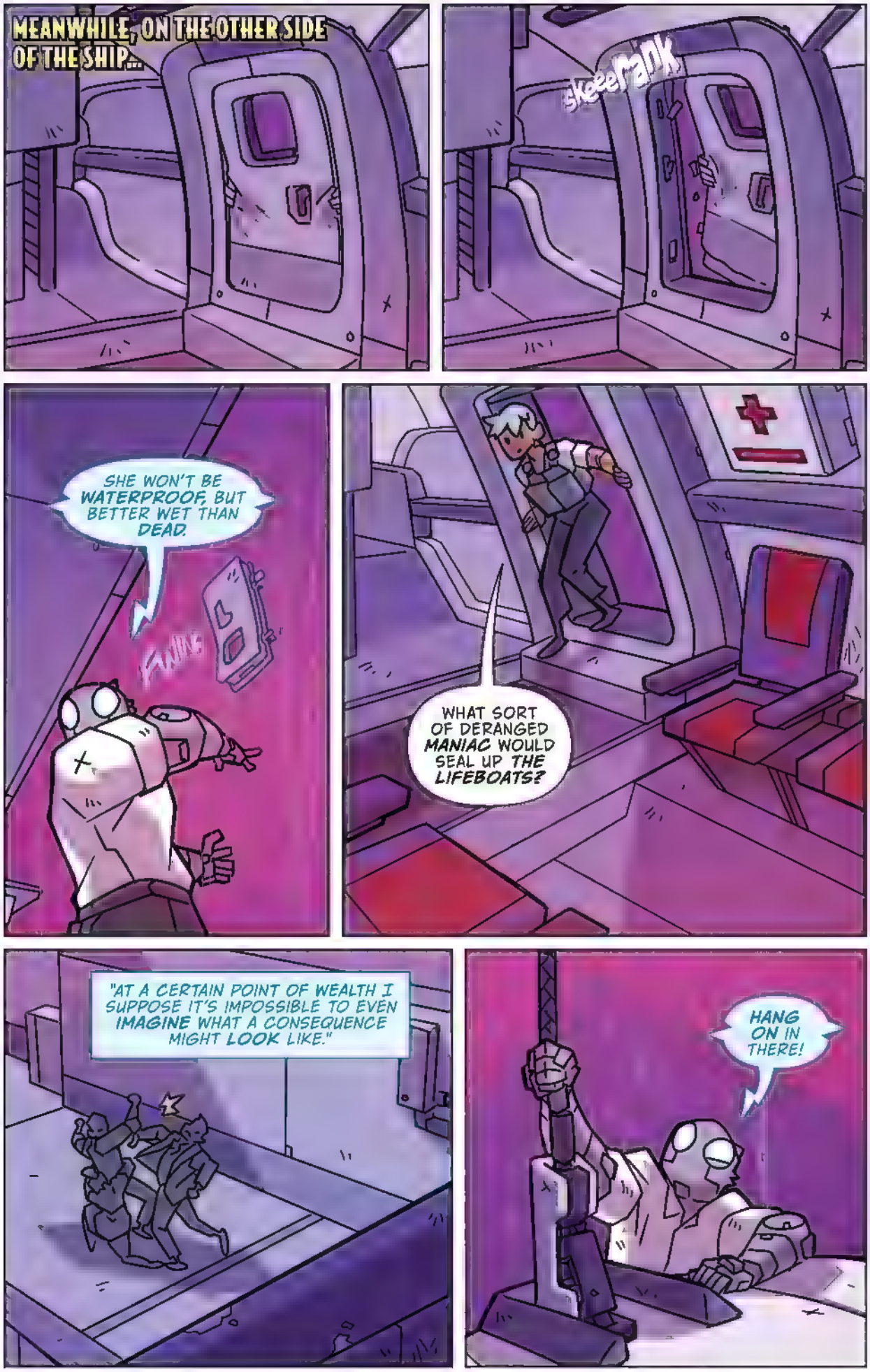
MRPFF
SHRRAK
MS. FOLEY!
SURRENDER IF YOU VALUE HER LIFE, ROBOT!
VAS..?
CLEAR A PATH TO THE WEATHER MACHINE!

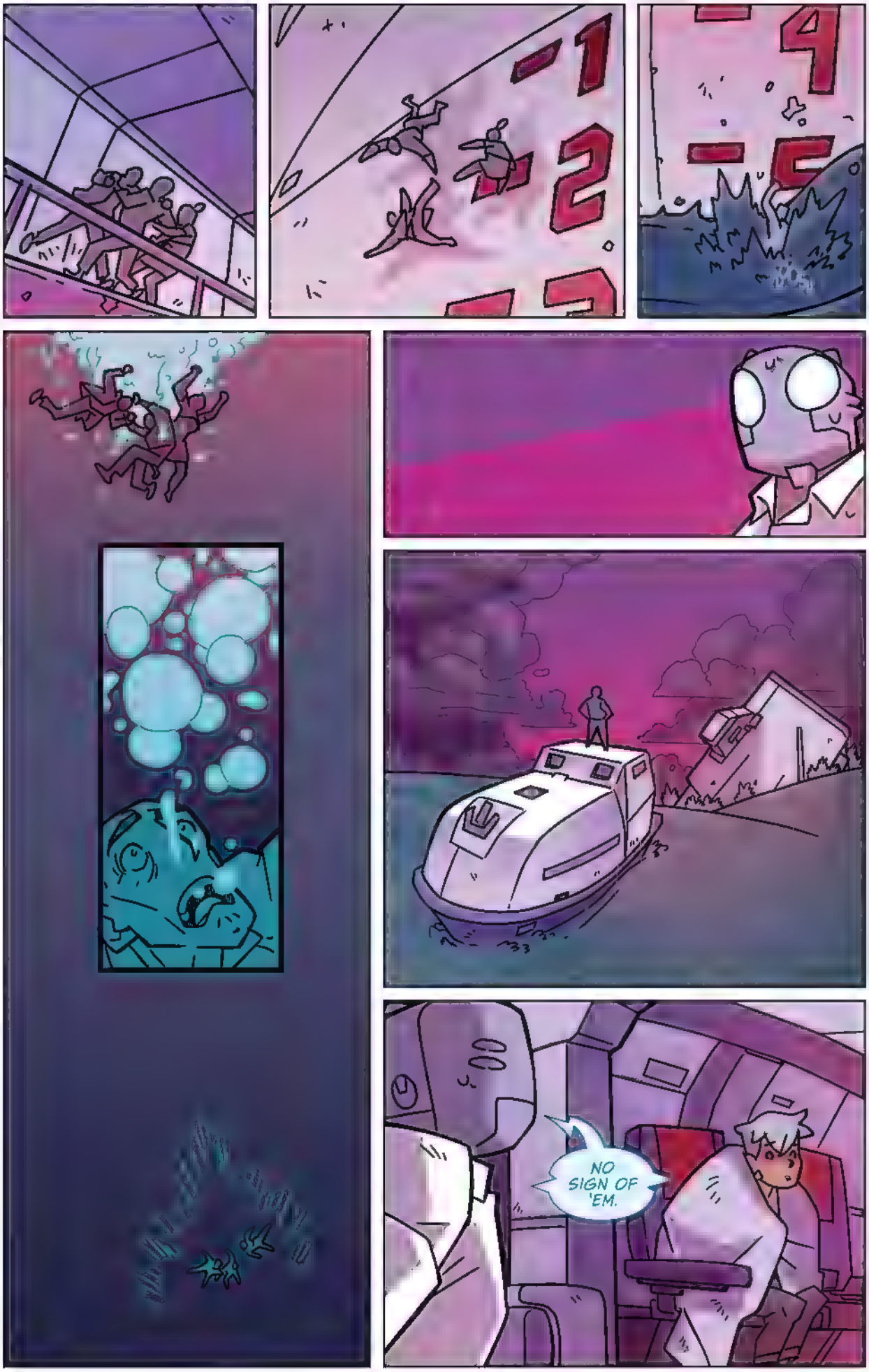

BLOOM
BRATTA
boop
dwiget
BAH!

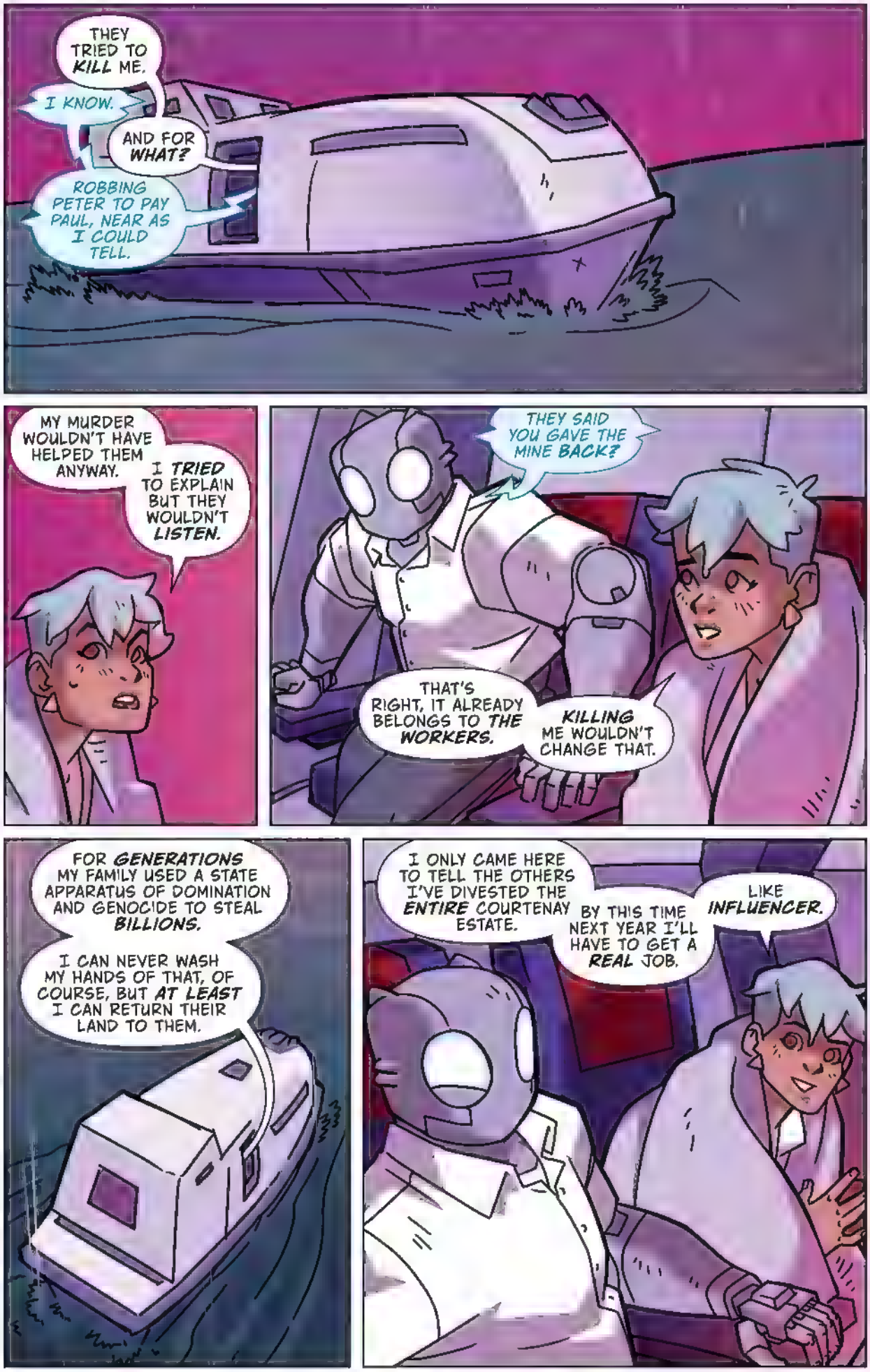

KFWOOM
I SUPPOSE YOU CONSIDER THIS TO BE SOME SORT OF VICTORY?

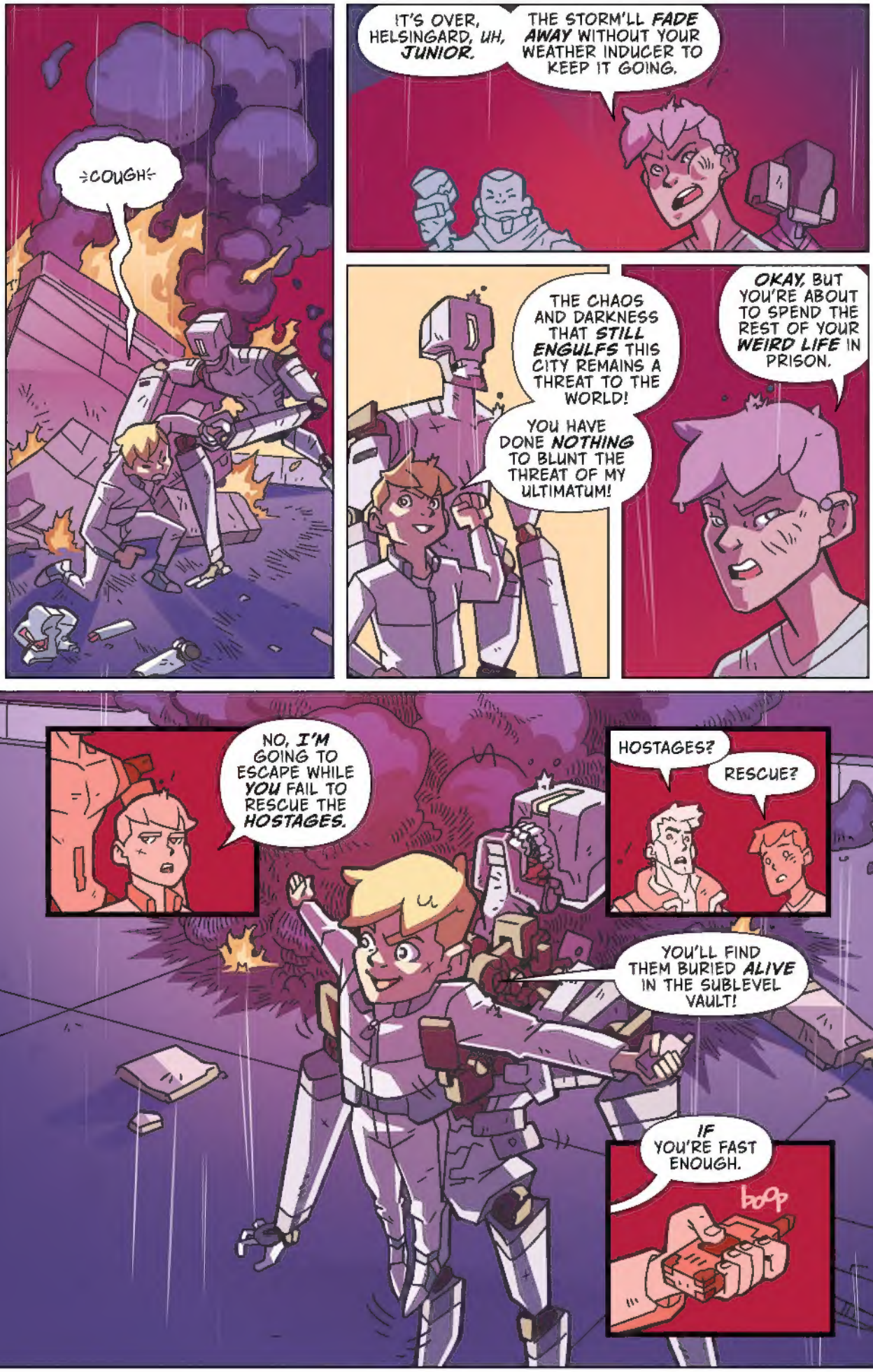
ARE YOU THINKING WHAT I'M THINKING?
HEAR THAT? THE SEA.
WE'RE NEARLY THERE.
HE'LL GAIN ELEANORE AND STAFFORD'S STAKES IN OUR COMPANIES AND SELL THEM OFF TO HOLD CONTROL OF HIS OWN.
HE GIVES US NO CHOICE.
THE LIFEBOATS!

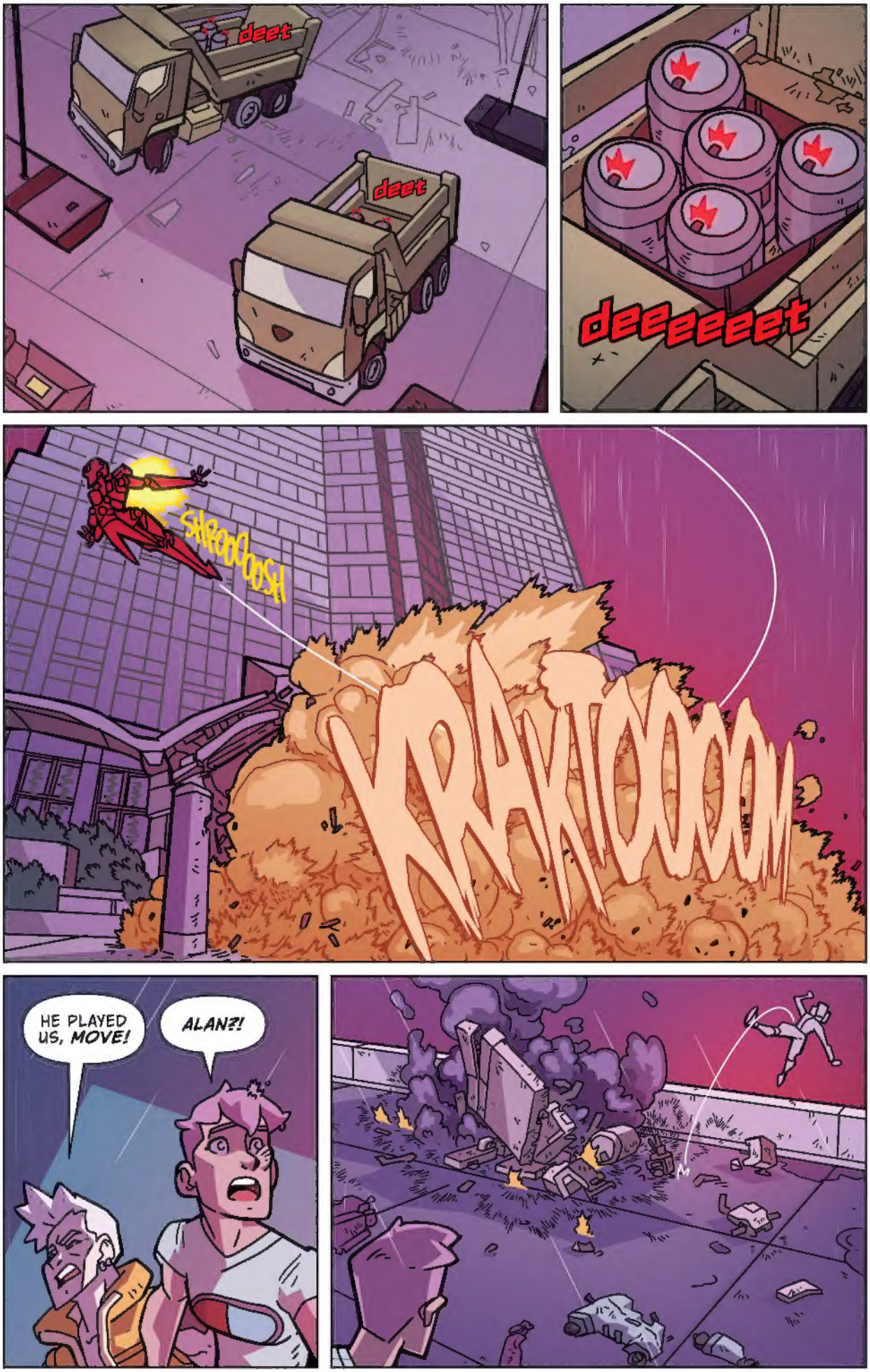

...THE DEVIL?
THIS IS NO TIME FOR HORSEPLAY, ZEBOS.
THE LIFEBOATS ARE LOCKED.
SO UNLOCK THEM.
WE CAN'T.
SECURITY PRECAUTION.
IT'S TO KEEP THE STAFF, WHEN THERE IS STAFF, FROM ACCESSING EXECUTIVE PERKS.
THEY CAN ONLY BE UNLOCKED VIA OUR ELITE PASSENGER APP.
BUT THE SERVERS AND OUR PHONES WERE FRIED BY THE EMP.


MEANWHILE, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SHIP...
SKEEEANK
SHE WON'T BE WATERPROOF, BUT BETTER WET THAN DEAD.
FWING
WHAT SORT OF DERANGED MANIAC WOULD SEAL UP THE LIFEBOATS?
"AT A CERTAIN POINT OF WEALTH I SUPPOSE IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO EVEN IMAGINE WHAT A CONSEQUENCE MIGHT LOOK LIKE."
HANG ON IN THERE!


NO SIGN OF 'EM.


THEY TRIED TO KILL ME.
I KNOW.
AND FOR WHAT?
ROBBING PETER TO PAY PAUL, NEAR AS I COULD TELL.
MY MURDER WOULDN'T HAVE HELPED THEM ANYWAY.
I TRIED TO EXPLAIN BUT THEY WOULDN'T LISTEN.
THEY SAID YOU GAVE THE MINE BACK?
THAT'S RIGHT, IT ALREADY BELONGS TO THE WORKERS.
KILLING ME WOULDN'T CHANGE THAT.
FOR GENERATIONS MY FAMILY USED A STATE APPARATUS OF DOMINATION AND GENOCIDE TO STEAL BILLIONS.
I CAN NEVER WASH MY HANDS OF THAT, OF COURSE, BUT AT LEAST I CAN RETURN THEIR LAND TO THEM.
I ONLY CAME HERE TO TELL THE OTHERS I'VE DIVESTED THE ENTIRE COURTENAY ESTATE.
BY THIS TIME NEXT YEAR I'LL HAVE TO GET A REAL JOB.
LIKE INFLUENCER.


=COUGH=
IT'S OVER, HELSINGARD, UH, JUNIOR.
THE STORM'LL FADE AWAY WITHOUT YOUR WEATHER INDUCER TO KEEP IT GOING.
THE CHAOS AND DARKNESS THAT STILL ENGULFS THIS CITY REMAINS A THREAT TO THE WORLD!
YOU HAVE DONE NOTHING TO BLUNT THE THREAT OF MY ULTIMATUM!
OKAY, BUT YOU'RE ABOUT TO SPEND THE REST OF YOUR WEIRD LIFE IN PRISON.
NO, I'M GOING TO ESCAPE WHILE YOU FAIL TO RESCUE THE HOSTAGES.
HOSTAGES?
RESCUE?
YOU'LL FIND THEM BURIED ALIVE IN THE SUBLEVEL VAULT!
IF YOU'RE FAST ENOUGH.
boop


deet
deet
deeeeeeet
SHROOOOOSH
KRAKTOOOOOM
HE PLAYED US, MOVE!
ALAN?!

GOOD NEWS.
I SURVIVED THAT!
TWING
HELSINGARD WAS PROBABLY *LYING*, BUT WE CAN'T TAKE THAT CHANCE!

MEANWHILE, IN THE SUBLEVEL VAULT...
FABOOOM
WE'RE GONNA DIE!
YOUR PHONE STILL WORKS?
YEAH, BUT NO SIGNAL AS LONG AS WE'RE LOCKED IN THIS METAL BOX.
AREN'T YOU BOTH USING UP ALL OUR AIR BY TALKING?!
WE'VE GOT A/C, IT'S FINE.
ANYWAY, IT'S NOT LIKE YOU STOP BREATHING WHEN YOU STOP TALKING.
I-- YOU--!
THAT'S RIGHT, KEEP RECORDING.
LET THE WORLD KNOW WE DIED BECAUSE YOU USED UP ALL OUR AIR!
SKEEERAK
IF YOU'RE JUST JOINING US, THESE ARE THE FIRST IMAGES FROM THE LOS ANGELES BLACKOUT AFFECTING MILLIONS.
A NAKATOMI PLAZA EMPLOYEE UPLOADED LIVE FOOTAGE OF HIS OWN RESCUE BY THIS NEW ROBOT HERO NAMED, SIMPLY, ALAN.
LIVE
HI, I'M ALAN!
THE END